the weekly
Standard

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THE WAR ON THE MILITARY CULTURE

by James Webb

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Listening In On the Speaker

Give the *New York Times* some credit: Its continuing efforts to pump up the Gingrich "scandals" verge on the heroic. Friday morning January 10, the Gray Lady greeted its readers with the headline "Gingrich Is Heard Urging Tactics in Ethics Case" over the byline of Adam Clymer, the paper's designated Gingrich hound. All the non-verbal cues signaled a major revelation. There was a boxed three-column spread on the front page, with a large picture of Gingrich, and almost a full page on the inside, complete with side-bar. If only they'd had a story to go with it!

Apparently a Democratic congressman—"hostile to Mr. Gingrich," as Clymer delicately put it—passed along to the *Times* a tape of a phone call between Gingrich and the House leadership, made on the day Gingrich arrived at his agreement with the ethics committee. The agreement stipulated in part that Gingrich would not orchestrate attacks on the ethics committee.

Clymer wrote the story so artfully that casual readers might conclude Gingrich could be heard violating the agreement. In fact, the transcript proved that Gingrich and his colleagues were quite meticulously observing the agreement's jots and tittles. The story, in other words, was precisely the opposite of what the *Times* said. But the larger cause of toppling the speaker would have been ill served by an accurate headline: "Gingrich Heard Being Scrupulous in Not Violating Ethics Agreement."

For that matter, in its huffing and puffing to inflate another Gingrich non-scandal, the *Times* may have missed an even juicier story—one that was literally handed to it. As Ohio congressman Mike Oxley, a former FBI agent, points out: "The 1986 Electronic Communications Privacy Act makes it illegal to intentionally intercept cellular phone calls and to possess or divulge the contents of any intercepted conversation. The act of forwarding a secretly taped private conversation to a news organization for publication is explicitly prohibited under federal law."

Now here's some news: That unnamed congressman—so friendly to Adam Clymer but so "hostile to Mr. Gingrich"—was very likely violating federal law, something only Gingrich's frothiest critics accuse the speaker of doing. As a matter of fact, aides to Sen. Chuck Robb were actually convicted a few years back for disseminating a similarly taped conversation in hopes of damaging a political enemy. This could get interesting. Hearings, anyone? Or better yet, how about a special prosecutor?

Act Like Democrats

The morning meeting of House Republicans on the day of Newt Gingrich's reelection as speaker was highlighted by pro-Gingrich speeches from two Democrat-turned-Republicans—Billy Tauzin and Mike Parker. Both argued that their old colleagues, under the same circumstances, would have unflinchingly put loyalty to their party above all other considerations. Other notable speeches came from a visibly shaken Tom Campbell, rising to explain why he wouldn't be voting for Gingrich, and fellow moderate Marge Roukema, trying to extract from the leadership some rules changes in exchange for her support. She was rebuffed but supported the speaker anyway.

In contrast to the disciplined, hard-headed display of old-fashioned political muscle that had just gotten him the speaker's job for a second term, Gingrich's speech looked like it would take up where the maudlin San Diego convention left off last summer (you remember—the tear-jerking show that oh so successfully boosted Bob Dole's soccer-mom vote). Gingrich last week launched into a misbegotten parallel between the need to rethink race relations and the resistance of Olympics bureaucrats thirty-some years ago to Dick Fosbury's innovative high-jump technique. But just as he was conjuring up memories of his ill-fated beach-volleyball metaphor in San Diego, the speaker managed to find his footing and go on to deliver a speech that was vintage Gingrich (1994 vintage, that is). In its celebration of the American spirit and its upbeat arguments for serious conservative reforms such as the rollback of affirmative action and the curbing of judicial activism, the speech was an unanticipated triumph. Perhaps Gingrich remembered in time to stop himself that the high-jump innovation he was about to commend came to be known as the Fosbury Flop.

Getting to 83

Don't expect another Haley Barbour. That's the message to keep in mind when the 165 members of the Republican National Committee convene on January 17 to select a new leader. "Most of the committee members are looking for another Haley, but there's not one in this race," says Tom Slade, chairman of the Florida GOP. So who's going to be the next chairman? A *Hotline*/PoliticsNow poll last week found David Norcross of New Jersey, former RNC counsel, nominally leading with 19 votes, but the combined support for "Uncommitted" and "No answer"

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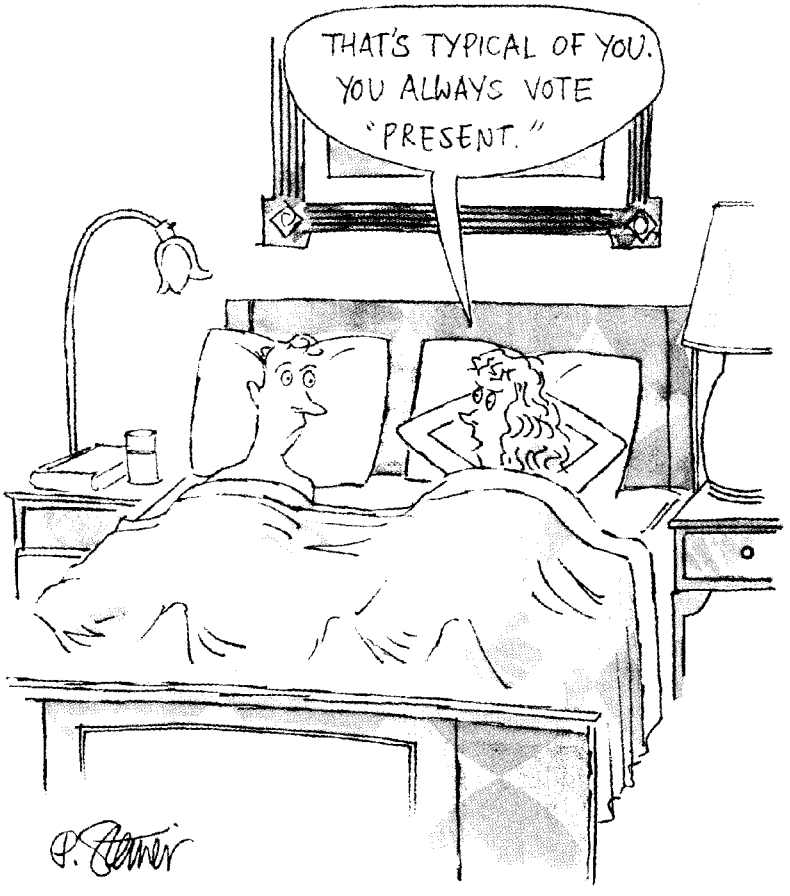

was a more revealing 90 votes. In other words, the race is wide open. Steve Merrill, the early front-runner and popular governor of New Hampshire, never managed to pull away from the field. And his home-state paper, the conservative *Manchester Union-Leader*, endorsed one of his opponents. A bigger problem may be that Merrill is seen by many committee members as an ally of high-priced consultants. The large bloc of Christian Coalition-oriented committee members—as many as 40, according to the Coalition's Ralph Reed—has expressed its reservations about Merrill on these grounds. It didn't help that Merrill, along with his promotional video, distributed a slick 18-page pamphlet advertising the Virginia consulting firm managing his race, Stevens, McAuliffe & Schriefer.

If Merrill falters, Norcross will pick up more votes. But his pro-choice position on abortion means he's unlikely to find the 83 votes needed to win. Nor do most observers expect that the Right's favored candidate, Tom Pauken, can get to 83, though he's shown surprising strength. Emerging late last week as a favored compromise candidate was Jim Nicholson, a conservative national committee member from Colorado. Nicholson is a Vietnam veteran who has spent the last 20 years mired in grassroots politics. He acknowledges, "While I'm not necessarily people's first choice, I am their second choice."

"Liberal Gentry" Update

Jane Amsterdam, the former *Manhattan inc.* editor who dropped out of the media whirl to drive horse carriages, has now been hired by Tina Brown of the *New Yorker* as a part-time editor. "At the moment, carriage driving is a lot harder to do than editing," Amsterdam told the *New York Observer*, presumably while sharpening her quill pen. Meanwhile, the January 9 Home section of the *New York Times* carried the vital article "A Vision of Simplicity Is New Grist for the Mill," which adds new depth to the esthetic limned two weeks ago in our article "The Liberal Gentry."

Edward Wilson, a dentist, and Barry Salzman, a management consultant, have renovated an 18th-century gristmill. The windows have been enlarged to mammoth size. Antique fence posts have been converted into sconces. A 19th-century wood and iron shoe rack has been turned into a wine rack. New white parchment shades were soaked in water, baked, dried, crushed, and ironed to give them appropriate texture. New ceilings were made from 100-year-old barnwood, while fresh wood for the staircase was beaten with a hammer, five-pound iron ball, ice pick, tiles, and chains to give it the proper aged look. (The ice pick made fake wormholes.) No cliché has been left out. A Liberal Gentry shrine.

Announcements!

With this issue we give a name and an editor to our cultural pages. Books & Arts will be the rubric for our expanded coverage of literature, biography, philosophy, history, art, movies, television, etc. The section's editor is Christopher Caldwell, who has been a senior writer here since the inception of The Weekly Standard. Among his many provocative articles were cover stories on the feminization of America and why O.J. Simpson continues to haunt us. (Plus Chris sits in his office and reads French novels—in French!)

We are also pleased to add Brit Hume to our roster of contributing editors. Now the Washington managing editor of Fox News, Brit began his career as a newspaperman at the *Hartford Times* and worked for Jack Anderson before joining ABC News in 1973. He has contributed articles to the *American Spectator* and the *New Republic* and writes a widely syndicated column on personal computers.

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Casual

My Father's Mansion Has Many Holes

It was dusk. Brooks flicked a speck of lint from his velvet smoking jacket, poured himself a finger of Chivas, and held out his glass so that it could capture a few ounces of water leaking down from the bathroom upstairs. Through the hole in the ceiling that had been cut by the plumber who had desperately tried to stem the leak, Brooks admired his wife as she applied the last of her emeralds. "Shall we dine eight-ish?" he asked. They were soon to host another of their glamorous Washington dinner parties. Her reply was drowned out by a sudden crash. It was the handiwork of the laborers outside, who were trying to rebind the wall of the house to its foundation.

It was dusk. Brooks retired to his sitting room and admired the way his two-year-old daughter had mastered the power saw a carpenter had left on the floor between visits. Contractors had begun making such frequent visits to the house that many were leaving tools and toothbrushes overnight. Many were having their mail forwarded. He sipped meditatively on his cocktail, trying to remember whether this was the night Oscar de la Renta was bringing Princess Stephanie. Regardless, it would—as it is every night at the Brooks salon—be an evening of glittering conversation, witty bons mots, and sensual elegance, as each guest would outdo the last in trying to explain why mud was mysteriously seeping up through the tiles of Brooks's downstairs bathroom. Ensconced in a wing chair, Brooks drifted off into a reverie: A bank official hands him a foreclosure notice and the Brooks family is forced to move out of this house (bought in September, just three months before) and into a dingy apartment. A smile swept across Brooks's face. If only!

It was dusk. The cool gray of the winter's evening permeated the abode; one of the painters had earlier in the day detected water seeping through the wall around the circuit-breaker box, so the power had been shut off. The air was frosted with anticipation of the coming candlelit dinner. The bracing winter's wind whispered a dulcet tune through the holes around the window frames. Brooks watched his breath cloud and drift upwards, until crystalline drops of condensation mimicked the water stains on the ceiling.

It was dusk. The sounds of children's play resounded from the kitchen, where Brooks's six-year-old son was trapped under some of the cabinetry that had been shaken loose when the dishwasher door again fell unaccountably to the floor. Halfway extricated, the boy was able to motion to his mother upstairs through the other hole in the ceiling, the one caused by the leaking pipes in the children's bathroom.

It was dusk. A sense of calm enveloped the Brooks household, disturbed only by the twinkling of jackhammers as the landscapers regraded the ground around the back room, where water had been flooding into the basement. Martha Stewart had stopped by to pick up a few tips on gracious living, and Brooks put aside his collection of E.B. White essays. For a few minutes the halls resounded with gasps of admiration as Miss Stewart gushed over the piquant French furnishings, the graceful rococo settees, and the witty yet elegant gash in the dining-room wall (so admired by the curatorial staff of the National Gallery at the recent fundraiser hosted by the Brookses). The wall had been breached accidentally by a carpenter who was trying to install bookshelves in the adjacent living room.

It was dusk. Brooks wandered into the kitchen and savored the rich aroma of homemade bread—the flour ground from the bones of the realtor who had made a 6 percent commission selling him the house. The kitchen wall, last painted during the Coolidge administration, was itself an edifying canvas of 20th-century food stains. Twirling an elegant '73 Merlot in preparation for its uncorking, Brooks could only admire the energy with which the home's previous owners had practiced their drilling techniques on the kitchen walls.

It was dusk, and in the growing darkness the house was transformed into a symphony of melodious murmurings. From the basement came the gentle lapping of rain puddles brushing against the family book collection, still waiting for the shelves to be completed. The sump pump was doing its work much as the legendary Sisyphus did his, and with as much effect. Brooks could hear the sound of shuffling feet outside the front door. The guests had arrived five minutes earlier, but Brooks had not heard them because the doorbell didn't work. Knocks followed. As Brooks entered the foyer, he heard the creaking of the ceiling above just before it came down on his head. As the paramedics lifted him onto the gurney he looked up where his roof had once been and beheld the infinite vastness of the sky. It was dusk.

David Brooks

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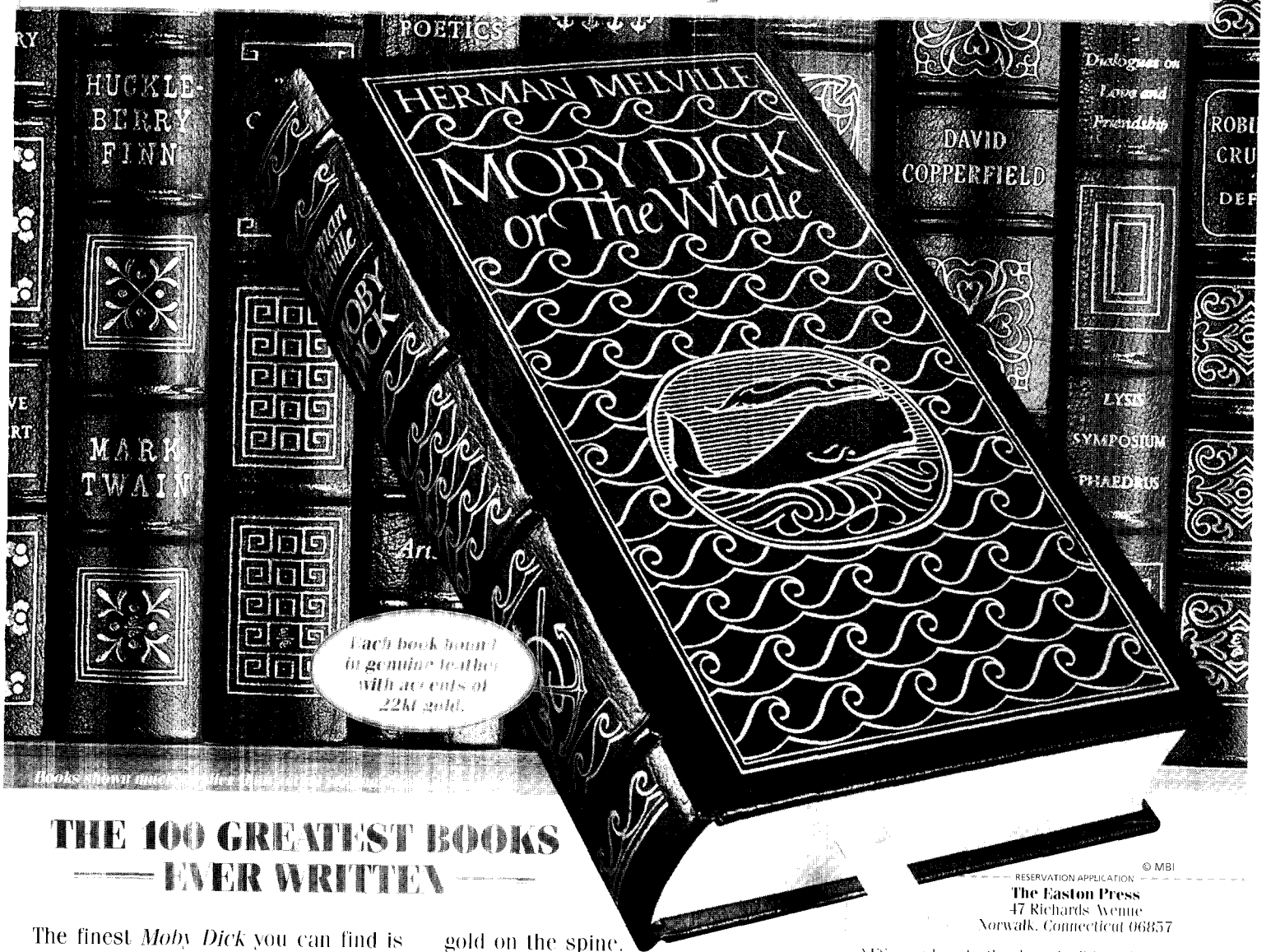

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Liberal Gentry, Behold History

David Brooks's "The Liberal Gentry" (Dec. 30/Jan. 6) was enormously entertaining reading. The piece was a brilliant mixture of Veblenian analysis and acidulous description comparable to Tom Wolfe. There is, however, one point I wish Brooks had made.

Isn't the egregious bad taste of plutocrats—those who have more money than sense—as old as civilization itself? In fact, when measured against the grossness of Imperial Rome, the suffocating *préciosité* of France under Louis XVI, or the hypertrophied consumption of Gilded Age America, the inanities of the Liberal Gentry seem harmless. One could even make the case that the Liberal Gentry are actually moving in a healthy direction. Compare them with their more recent predecessors who lavished sums of money that would have beggared Croesus on the daubings of Pollack, Warhol, and Lichtenstein.

That aside, I was particularly appalled by Brooks's vision of the good life, as he describes it in the last sentence of the piece. He bursts into song about the joys of slaving away "in a manic brokerage house, hunched over a trading terminal, in a glitzy city amidst all the frantic and kaleidoscopic activity of the real world." I have to believe that only a former employee of the *Wall Street Journal* could romanticize a stock trading company in one of America's current Bosch-like urban pestholes. If this is his idea of the *summum bonum*, he should take a break from his labors at The Weekly Standard and spend a few weeks in the country getting some fresh air.

Michael S. Burch
Alexandria, VA

Regarding David Brooks's piece: I get a real kick out of observing the exotic habits of each rising generation of *nouveaux riches*. Certainly the liberal gentry's communing with nature beats the vulgarity of our Mauve Decade tycoons with their horseback banquets in the old Waldorf ballroom.

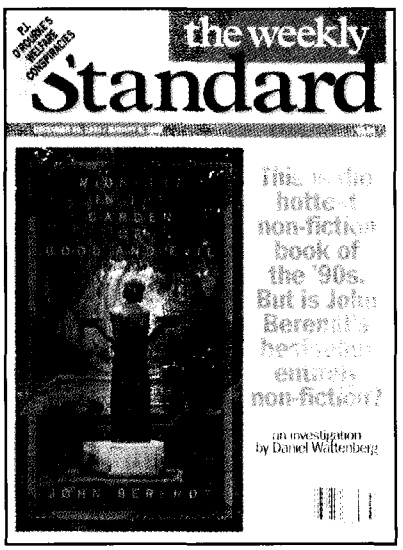
And who cannot but sympathize with Jilly Cooper's vivid description, in *Class*, of the old English gentry, who hunt, shoot, and fish around their ancient country houses replete with creaky stairs, dilapidated sofas, and primitive plumbing.

I do hope Brooks does not want to consign the liberal gentry to the same, sad fate that befell Marie Antoinette, another devotee of rusticity, who played the role of milkmaid at her play farm on the grounds of Versailles with her ladies-in-waiting. Ah, the bucolic life!

William A. Weinrich
Tulsa, OK

Mixing Fact and Fiction

I would like to commend Daniel Wattenberg for his reprimand of John



Berendt's blatant disregard for the truth ("*Midnight* Fact and Fiction," Dec30/Jan. 6). His article was most refreshing at a time when society applauds and rewards those who stretch the truth under the guise of artistic liberties. But what else can we expect from Berendt? We have made men like Oliver Stone famous and wealthy. And for what? For making films like *Born on the Fourth of July* and *Nixon*, which were supposedly true stories and yet were full of stretched truth. I hope that Wattenberg's article wakes up American viewers and readers.

Victoria Staten Ducharme
Hilton Head, SC

Dr. Spock's Got the Scoop

My wife and I enjoyed Claudia Winkler's "Dr. Spock . . . Neoconservative?" (Dec. 30/Jan. 6). Winkler even helped settle a family dispute. Upon the birth of our son, we discovered that babies, unlike cars and cameras, do not come with owner's manuals. We began avidly searching for appropriate books on the subject. A friend recommended Dr. Spock's book, thus drawing a knowing laugh from me given the man's politics and reputation. My wife, however, boldly began reading it. We've found the book fairly useful, taken with a grain of salt. Your article helps explain why.

William F. Connelly, Jr.
Lexington, VA

I heard Dr. Spock speak in 1970 at the University of Miami's Earth Day celebration. He displayed what today we would call a real concern about the environment. He was soft-spoken and didn't talk about child-rearing, but did specify that we should take care of our world for our children. He didn't seem radical, just concerned.

In the same way, his concern for children is at the fore of *Baby and Child Care*. Spock's politics should take a second place to his common sense approach to one of life's most difficult endeavors. His book was at my side while I raised two children. I trusted his clear and concise answers, and it is clear that plenty of others did too, despite his politics.

Donne Paine
Long Beach, CA

Claudia Winkler's piece appears to show how a few steps away from the Left does not a conservative (neo or otherwise) make. Winkler suggests Dr. Spock no longer deserves the reputation of being a purveyor of permissiveness and laissez-faire morality.

Without ever thoroughly denouncing the teachings of his earlier books, Dr. Spock found religion and strong families—for others, that is. As Winkler points out, this took place around the same time that he joined arms with the antiwar movement, which did much to discredit strong families. Spock's half-blind understanding of what keeps families strong is a typical way of excluding oneself from the rigor that makes other

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people's lives moral. It is in this vein that he finds the chutzpah to say he "envies" other people's faith.

The book with some of the sharpest lessons on raising children is Rousseau's much-overlooked *Emile*. The very first lesson Rousseau thinks a baby should learn is that he is not the master of the universe and that his parents will not be slaves to his whims. Contrast this to the indulgent treatment of children today and one sees how Rousseau was perhaps the cynic and today's parent the romantic—and Dr. Spock, the romantic's teacher.

While Dr. Spock recommends "ideals" and examples to "inspire" the child, he neglects any hardheaded conception of human nature. Thus he fails to grasp the weakness of his wishy-washy teachings. Perhaps he still deserves the label "permissive."

DAVID SKINNER
WASHINGTON, DC

As a child of baby-boomers, I was particularly interested in Claudia Winkler's article. I'm always delighted to hear about aging liberal icons' recognizing the follies of their youth. Perhaps, if his name still inspires new parents to seek guidance in raising children, Dr. Spock can also inspire new parents to help reverse the slide toward a chaotic and uncivilized society.

LANCE BEEHLER
BLUFFTON, SC

CRIME-SOFT COURTS

I normally enjoy Andrew Peyton Thomas's contributions, but "The Soft-On-Crime Rehnquist Court" (Dec. 23) is a disappointing exception. I suspect that Thomas would agree with the maxim that the ends do not justify the means—except, it seems, when prosecuting suspected criminals.

Regarding the *Ornelas* case, Thomas writes that the defendants "consented" to a search of their car. Consent, as Thomas is well aware, is an exception to the warrant requirement. Therefore, if the defendants truly had consented to a search, then no legal issue should remain to discuss. If, on the other hand, they did not actually consent to the search, as must have been the case, then what transpired by Thomas's own description was the dismantling of a vehicle based on suspicion. That sounds as much like police-state work as it does good police work.

As a conservative public defender, I simply see too many instances of elected judges' making cowardly, if politically safe, decisions that do not make the headlines but do deprive defendants of their rights. Combine this with the sad fact that some few prosecutors will attempt to win at all costs, rather than seek justice, and the decisions that Thomas decries are warranted.

FRANK T. PIMENTEL
ROCHESTER, NY

LET THE GENDER WAR BEGIN

Christopher Caldwell's "The Feminization of America" (Dec. 23) began nicely by noting that women are "first among equals" and are the "dominant class." Unfortunately the article went on chauvinistic tangents and ended up avoiding the true meaning and cause of these facts.

Caldwell writes, "Cultural ideas about female priorities are coming to a remarkable convergence. Those who would further 'feminize' society make the same arguments as those who would de-feminize it—that women and men are different and that those differences need to be respected."

Come on. The feminists, and the general population, are not coming to believe in traditional gender roles. They talk about inequality as a tool to become, as Caldwell wrote, "primus inter pares." The differences feminists believe in are the ones necessary to make women win and men lose.

I wish Caldwell had added a section about how women are the first sex under the law. This situation leaves men in the same predicament as blacks in the 1950s. Men have become second-class citizens, nominally equal, but subject to bigotry in the law.

One can look to the unequal enforcement of the laws for evidence. For many crimes, men will receive years in jail, but women get a slap on the wrist or are not even prosecuted. Look also to divorce laws. Both political parties brag about hunting down "deadbeat dads" but ignore mothers who refuse to let the children see their fathers. Likewise, when a man is expected to face a woman in court, all kinds of special courtroom privileges are given to the woman, and age-old rights are taken away from the man. The cornerstone of feminist law is abuse. Abuse is a one-way street. A woman can be excused from any crime, including the murder of children, on account of abuse at any time in her life.

Also, Caldwell might have noted the most direct reason why politics has been feminized. Women have built powerful political groups, most liberal, some conservative, while men refuse to do the same. Society is becoming feminized because men won't fight, so women win the battle by default.

Men don't get involved because politicians fail to give them reasons to do so. During the last election, both parties took turns trying to see who could pander to women the most. Neither side had anything to say to men, other than calling them deadbeat dads. As far as I'm concerned, there are two feminist parties.

RUSSELL VAN ZANDT
NORTHBROOK, IL

ANATHEMA TO DEMOCRACY

Matthew Rees's "The Judge Who Hates CCRI" (Dec. 16) presents an insightful personal and political profile of San Francisco's chief U.S. district judge Thelton E. Henderson—a Carter appointee and the man who single-handedly "stole" the votes of 54 percent of Californians by imperiously blocking the implementation of Proposition 209. Judge Henderson—obviously a man for whom the democratically expressed will of the people is an anathema—represents the apex of judicial activism.

THOMAS M. EDWARDS
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

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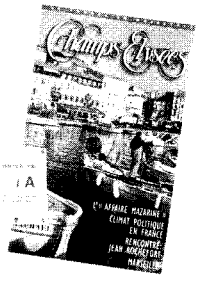

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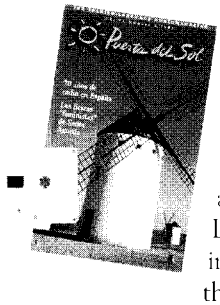

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the weekly Standard

CONSTITUTIONAL SUICIDE

Does the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution guarantee a right to doctor-prescribed poison for mentally competent, terminally ill patients who want a speedier death? Last year, the nation's two largest federal circuit courts of appeals, the Second and the Ninth, answered yes and invalidated felony prohibitions against physician-assisted suicide in the states of New York and Washington. In certain circumstances, these courts said, assisted self-murder must now be enshrined with life, liberty, and property as a protected right.

If this whole idea appalls you—as it certainly should—last Wednesday morning's Supreme Court session offers at least some atmospheric comfort. Attorneys for New York and Washington, joined by solicitor general Walter Dellinger on behalf of the Clinton administration, were at the lectern to seek reversals of the appeals court judgments. They did okay. Lawyers on the opposing side had a very rough time of it. Seattle's Kathryn L. Tucker, counsel for the Washington physician-assisted-suicide advocates, and Harvard's Laurence H. Tribe, her counterpart in the New York case, were both met with bluntly skeptical and frequently sarcastic questioning from the bench. Most of the justices are clearly eager to avoid entangling the Constitution in this matter.

THE ONLY THING STANDING BETWEEN CURRENT LAW AND WIDESPREAD EUTHANASIA IS AN AD HOC OPINION BY A HANDFUL OF JUDGES IN WASHINGTON.

Good luck. Given its own misguided Fourteenth Amendment rulings, there is no obvious way for the Supreme Court to decide that physician-assisted suicide is *not* constitutionally required. Yes, it seems likely that the justices, after fumbling around in their own precedential muck, will find a way to vacate the Second and Ninth circuit decisions and reinstate the anti-suicide laws of New York and Washington. It will be a welcome ruling. But it will also mean that the only thing standing between current law and a regime of widespread, unregulated euthanasia in America is an ad hoc edict by a handful of judges in Washington. Surely we can and must do better than this.

Two possible constitutional rationales for physician-assisted suicide are at issue here. One involves the Fourteenth Amendment's equal-protection clause, which requires state laws to treat similarly situated people in a similar manner unless some legitimate public purpose can be cited to justify a difference. New York's criminal code makes aiding or promoting a suicide illegal. But New York law also allows competent citizens the right to hasten their own demise by refusing medical treatment and ordering the removal of life-support systems. So New York doctors may assist competent, terminally ill patients who have suicidal intent so long as those patients are on a ventilator or feeding tube. But if those patients are not on a ventilator or feeding tube, they are denied comparable assistance: a dose of lethal medication. The laws of all 50 states now work roughly this way. And they violate the equal protection clause, according to proponents of physician-assisted suicide.

The risks states usually cite to justify criminalization of doctor-provided poison—that it will damage the integrity of the medical profession, that it will prove difficult to regulate, that it will be used unfairly against the poor and the handicapped—are as nothing to the "death with dignity" crowd. In a Supreme Court brief filed on behalf of six self-described "moral and political philosophers," Ronald Dworkin explains that worrying over the possibility that vulnerable patients might ever be pressured into suicide is not just unnecessary, but *wrong*. "Even people who are dying have a

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right to hear and, if they wish, act on what others might wish to tell or suggest or even hint to them," he writes, "and it would be dangerous to suppose that a state may prevent this on the ground that it knows better than its citizens when they should be moved by or yield to particular advice or suggestion."

Dworkin has elsewhere proposed that the government prevent its citizens, for their own good, from hearing too much candidate-financed political debate on television and radio. A 30-second ad is apparently more dangerous to your health, and less constitutionally protected, than an insurance agent's request that you kill yourself. Dworkin is a fool.

But the Second Circuit agrees with him. And were the Supreme Court ever to accept this interpretation of the equal-protection clause, all manner of horrors would quickly ensue—as a direct and inevitable consequence of settled law. If there is no constitutionally significant difference between assisted suicide and the withdrawal of life support, a right to assisted suicide cannot be restricted to terminally ill people. Throughout the United States, the doctrine of informed consent grants *anyone*, not just the terminally ill, a right to refuse life-saving measures. The Second Circuit's reasoning would grant them an additional right to poison. And not only them. Incompetent patients—infants, the retarded and mentally ill, people with Alzheimer's—would gain similar new "benefits." Most state laws give surrogates and guardians the authority to end life support to incompetent individuals whether or not those individuals have ever expressed a desire to die in such circumstances. Poisoning these unfortunates would be quicker. And legal.

IF THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ASSISTED SUICIDE AND THE WITHDRAWAL OF LIFE SUPPORT, A RIGHT TO ASSISTED SUICIDE CANNOT BE RESTRICTED TO THE TERMINALLY ILL.

Exactly the same ghastly results would follow were the Supreme Court to accept the second justification for physician-assisted suicide it heard last Wednesday, this one based on the Fourteenth Amendment's due process clause. In its 1992 *Planned Parenthood* v. *Casey* decision, the Supreme Court used "substantive due process" theory in crafting a fundamental right to define "one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life." Last year, without much intellectual trouble, the Ninth Circuit decided that this liberty includes the right to control "the time and manner of one's death"—and that a ban on physician-assisted suicide could not survive constitutional scrutiny. Since state courts generally establish that incompetent citizens, through their guardians, must have the same rights as competent citizens, a right to physician-assisted suicide would be a right to nonvoluntary euthanasia.

This due process argument will not be so easy for the Supreme Court to dismiss. Laurence Tribe has informed the justices that if their *Casey* decision "is to remain defensible as a principled explication of protected liberty," they must uphold the circuit courts. Rejecting a due-process-based right to assisted suicide, Tribe insists, "would render this Court's decision in *Casey* itself vulnerable to repudiation." He has a point.

It is on *Casey*'s shoulders that the American abortion right now rests. So which will it be, abortion and euthanasia—or neither? The Clinton administration hopes to evade this choice, for plainly political reasons. In his briefs to the Supreme Court, Walter Dellinger was forced to acknowledge "a constitutionally cognizable liberty interest in avoiding the kind of suffering" experienced by people who want physician-assisted suicide—an interest that must be derived in large part from *Casey*. At the same time, to protect the abortion right from its own logical outgrowth—from the damage of public association with euthanasia—Dellinger was forced to argue that states like New York and Washington may entirely ban the exercise of this newly identified liberty interest in assisted suicide. It's an odd sort of American liberty that may never be enjoyed. It's a preposterous argument.

To get out of this pickle, the Supreme Court may well adopt some version of Dellinger's reasoning, to be sure. But the increasingly hideous distortion of American law by "substantive due process" and the constitutionalized abortion right will remain. The solution? Eventually, the abortion right must go. In the meantime, we must fashion a federal judiciary that is not inclined to use substantive due process against common logic, settled tradition, and the democratic deliberations of ordinary voters and their representatives.

How? Politicians in Washington like to decry the application of philosophical litmus tests to judicial nominees—litmus tests like the one that felled Robert Bork's appointment to the Supreme Court. "No more Borks," we're all supposed to say. Baloney. The Fourteenth Amendment is out of whack. Lives now depend on its correct interpretation. A Republican Senate reviewing Democratic judicial nominees must finally take off its dainty white gloves and press this point home hard. Bork away, gentlemen.

—David Tell, for the Editors

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Newt, Now More Than Ever

by William Kristol

On November 8, 1994, Republicans under the leadership of Newt Gingrich ended decades of Democratic congressional dominance. On November 5, 1996, Republicans held on to Congress and so strengthened their claim to be the new majority party. And on January 7, 1997, Republicans overcame Democratic efforts—as well as their own fears—and reelected Gingrich speaker of the House.

This last may yet prove to be the date that confirms the significance of the first two. January 7 may be remembered as the moment when the Republican party showed that it was a serious party, unintimidated by the opposition, uncowed by the media, willing to stand the heat that radiates from any effort to reshape American politics.

Some in the GOP sought to talk primarily about Gingrich's merits as speaker, which missed the significance of last week's vote. Thus, in an otherwise sound defense of his old friend in the *Wall Street Journal*, Jack Kemp went out of his way to make the case for Gingrich as a "progressive conservative." Kemp explained that supporting Gingrich was "not a matter of closing ranks," but rather of selecting the best leader. Yet if your leader is under unfair and vicious attack, it is, and ought to be, *precisely* a matter of closing ranks. That's what House Republicans did last week. And it proved inspiriting.

It was hostile reporters, more than many Republicans, who understood this. Francis X. Clines of the *New York Times* could not help but be impressed by the whoop that went up from the victorious side after the votes were counted. He described it as "echoing all the way from the tribal conflicts of prehistory with the true meaning of partisan zeal." Clines waxed Homeric: "On their feet, roaring with victory, the Republican majority of the 105th Congress successfully defended Newt Gingrich today as Speaker and saluted him with a joy that sounded visceral, as if he had routed a band of bandits at the edge of the tribal water hole." Gingrich had.

Walter Shapiro described the vote in *USA Today* as "the political equivalent of The Charge of the Light Brigade. Cannon to the left of them, cannon to the right of them—and still the Republicans stubbornly marched into the 105th Congress with their banner and their heads held high." Exactly so. Except Republicans, unlike the British in the Crimean War, can win—if they keep their nerve.

Al Hunt of the *Wall Street Journal* contends wishfully that Gingrich's victory was "Pyrrhic." But his bitterness at the Republican refusal to buckle under to the assault on the speaker reveals the terrible truth: Tuesday's vote was potentially a huge defeat for the American Left. Accustomed to winning through the media and the "ethics process" what it has failed to achieve at the ballot box, the Left finally met with resistance—and successful resistance at that. Andrew Sullivan in the London *Sunday Times*, who correctly denounced the anti-Gingrich scandal-mongers as a "lynch mob," pointed out that it would be a "perfect irony" if Gingrich—"one of the least sleazy politicians in America" and the man who bore on behalf of his entire party the unpopularity that comes from trying to achieve real reform—were to fall. Serious political movements do not tolerate such irony. The fact that House Republicans were willing to stick with their leader suggests that we may now have a serious political movement on the right, and that we may indeed be entering a new political era.

Or maybe not. If January 7 turns out to be a mere one-time rallying of the troops; if Republicans immediately revert to psychological and political defensiveness; if they wait with fear and trembling for the next shoe to drop in the Gingrich case; if they dignify the "ethics process" with concern and treat false "revelations" such as a tape recording leaked to, and dutifully made a front-page story by, the *New York Times* as anything but comic—then last week's impressive display of spine will have been for naught. If they get rattled when the special counsel's report is unveiled and continue to dread the putative electoral cost of their support for the speaker (in an election 22 months off), then January 7 will turn out to have been merely a delay in the "inevitable" downfall of Gingrich. We will then know that the Republican party is still, in its heart, the party that knows it is bound to lose.

The next few weeks are key. Here is what Republicans should do: They should treat the Gingrich case as settled. They should repeat again and again the core truth that the premise of the ethics assault is ludicrous—that Gingrich's course is no more partisan than most college courses and that his alleged misrepresentations are trivial. They should treat the release of special counsel James Cole's report with insouciance and the media's agitation with disdain. They should insist on a speedy disposition of the case and vote for a slap on the wrist, without apology and without anguish. If they do all this, they will find the crucible of the Gingrich vote to have been a strengthening, rather than an enfeebling, experience.

For the loyalty his troops showed him, Gingrich now owes something to them: leadership. A certain

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amount of bipartisanship is fine, and a certain amount of making nice and sounding moderate is appropriate, but Republicans don't really need Gingrich as speaker if they want simply to appease the media, reach out to soccer moms, and be kinder and gentler. After all, Gingrich *is* abrasive and unpopular. While he ought to avoid the mistake of seeming "revolutionary" and reckless, there will have been no purpose for GOP courage on Gingrich's behalf if he fails to deliver bold leadership in pursuit of a substantive conservative agenda.

Gingrich's leadership when the GOP was in the minority helped create the new Republican era; the reason to stand behind him now as speaker is so that he can lead Republicans to further ideological victories in 1998 and 2000, ones that deepen and extend the significance of 1994.

In beating back David Bonior, Al Hunt, and the rest, Gingrich and the Republicans showed that they were in charge of this Congress, as the public elected them to be. Their task now is to show why it is right that they be in charge, why it makes a difference that they are in charge, and why it matters that the Republican party has finally stood up to the media and the political establishment and said: Enough.

Editor and Publisher William Kristol's "An Agenda for the 105th Congress" appeared in last week's issue.

No Retribution

by Fred Barnes

Disloyal Republicans in the House don't get punished. They get rewarded. That is what's happened to the nine Republicans who refused to vote for Newt Gingrich's reelection as speaker on January 7. They suddenly became heroes in their districts, lauded for their independence and courage. In some cases their political futures brightened. Their hometown papers treated them like saints. The *Seattle Times* said representative Linda Smith of Washington "deserves undiluted admiration" for abandoning Gingrich. California representative Tom Campbell took the high road, making "the direct, ethical argument against Gingrich, not the political, tactical one," insisted the *San Jose Mercury-News*. And here's how the *Des Moines Register* reacted to the anti-Gingrich vote of Iowa's Jim Leach: He "has a moral compass and follows its directions when it would be far easier to be blown along by political winds."

Given the pressure from Gingrich and House GOP leaders, it wasn't easy to vote against Gingrich. But it wasn't all that hard either. Gingrich, demonized by the national media, is the most unpopular politician in the country. When considering how to vote for House speaker, says representative Mark Sanford of South Carolina, he quickly concluded "the politically expedient route" was to trash Gingrich. And Sanford is from Charleston, a Republican stronghold and conservative hotbed. Even there, had he voted against Gingrich, "I'd be a huge hero." Sanford, who has lingering doubts about Gingrich's ability to lead effectively, voted for him. "It was a bad political move for me," Sanford says.

What about stiff punishment by Republican leaders for breaking ranks and shattering GOP unity? Forget it. "That wasn't an issue people were worried about," says Sanford. The night before the vote, he gathered with eight House Republicans to discuss Gingrich. The question of retribution never came up. Representative Mark Souder of Indiana, a conservative who's often clashed with Gingrich, also flirted with the idea of going against the speaker. He didn't give the prospect of punishment a second thought either. Souder voted for Gingrich, though he knows firsthand the political value of bucking him. In 1995 during the budget battle with President Clinton, Souder refused to go along with Gingrich's decision to reopen the federal government. As punishment, Gingrich announced he wouldn't appear as planned at a Souder fund-raiser, which had been expected to reap $60,000. With the fanfare over his independence from Gingrich, Souder's stature in Indiana soared. The fund-raiser brought in $250,000.

This is not a new phenomenon. Challenging his party's leadership in Washington made Phil Gramm a Texas icon and national figure. As a Democratic House member in 1983, Gramm was stripped of his position on the Budget Committee because he collaborated with Republicans on cutting federal spending. He responded by quitting Congress, switching parties, running in a special election, and winning in a landslide. In 1984, he was elected to the Senate as a Republican. Senator Richard Shelby of Alabama, a Democrat who had won narrowly in 1986, benefited from splitting with President Clinton in 1993. When the administration yanked a federal project from Alabama, Shelby was lionized in the state. He became enormously popular. In 1994, he won reelection handily, then became a Republican.

Obviously, Gingrich doesn't want to make martyrs

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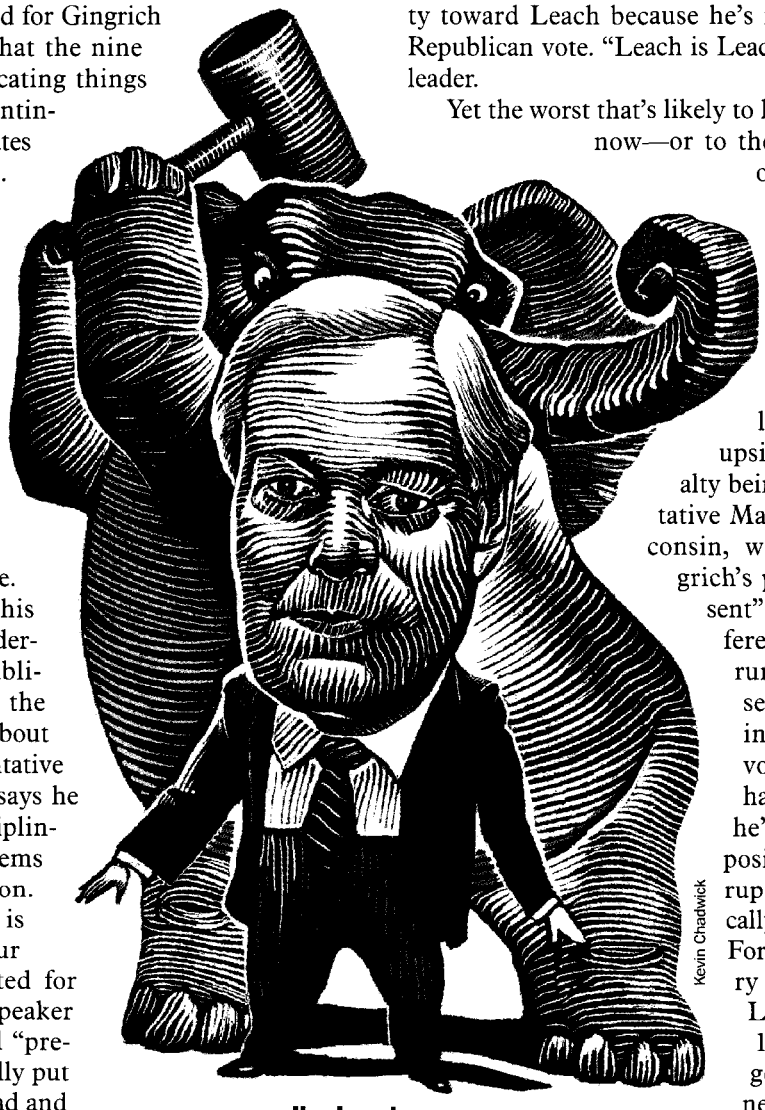
out of the nine renegades by punishing them publicly. But that's not the real reason for his refusal to exact retribution. Rather, his inaction reflects his weak position. For one thing, he needs all the Republicans he can get when the House votes on his own punishment for ethics violations. "The margin of victory is so narrow, you don't want to turn anyone into an enemy," says representative David McIntosh of Indiana. Besides, says a GOP House member, "a lot of people who voted for Gingrich are sympathetic to what the nine did." Further complicating things for Gingrich is his continued wooing of moderates on substantive votes. That effort would suffer if a moderate like Leach were deposed as chairman of the Banking Committee. But if Gingrich only went after conservative dissenters, that would anger many in the large conservative GOP bloc. It's lose-lose.

Still, Gingrich, his allies in the GOP leadership, and other Republicans are furious at the nine. They've talked about punishment. Representative Bob Barr of Georgia says he may seek formal disciplining, though that seems unlikely any time soon. The greatest anger is directed at the four Republicans who voted for another person for speaker (the five others voted "present"). "They essentially put a gun to the king's head and pulled the trigger, but the king lived," says a member of the GOP leadership. "That's the ultimate crime." Gingrich has told associates he blames representative Michael Forbes of New York especially for being the first to declare he'd vote against Gingrich. That broke the ice, allowing further defections. Forbes voted for Leach for speaker.

Representative Linda Smith of Washington is blamed for grandstanding. House GOP whip Tom DeLay believes he had her promise to inform him first of how she would vote, but instead she announced her decision on TV. "She calls herself a reformer and she voted for a Washington lobbyist for speaker," huffed a GOP leader. (She voted for Bob Walker, a recently retired House member, now president of the Wexler Group.) Representative Tom Campbell, who voted for Leach, is faulted by the Gingrich forces for ingratitude, since they pumped $2 million into his House race in a special election in 1995. There's less animosity toward Leach because he's never been a reliable Republican vote. "Leach is Leach," says a Republican leader.

Yet the worst that's likely to happen to any of them now—or to the other five—is mild ostracism. Months or years down the road, they may fail to get prized committee assignments or be included in key decisions. They can all live with that, the upside from their disloyalty being so great. Representative Mark Neumann of Wisconsin, who acceded to Gingrich's pleas by voting "present" rather than for a different speaker, wants to run against Democratic senator Russ Feingold in 1998. Neumann's vote on Gingrich may have been principled—he's fanatical about opposing Washington corruption—but it's politically helpful nonetheless. Forbes may face a primary challenge for his Long Island seat in 1998, but at least he got his hometown newspaper, the bitterly anti-Gingrich *Newsday*, off his back. As for Campbell, Republican leaders believe they extracted a promise from him in 1995 to stay in the House, but now they fear he'll seek a Senate seat next year. He'll probably win, and then be in a position to vote against Trent Lott for Senate majority leader in 1999.


Kevin Chadwick

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Executive Editor Fred Barnes is a regular host of "Fox on Politics" on the Fox News Channel.

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CLINTON'S KIND OF GENERAL

by Carl M. Cannon

FOUR YEARS AGO, IN THE FIRST FEW weeks of the Clinton presidency, a three-star general attached to the Joint Chiefs of Staff was at the White House on official business when he said good morning to a young, female Clintonista. Instead of answering in kind, she scowled and replied: "We really don't want people in uniform over here . . ."

Isn't life odd? And, considering the way things have turned out, wouldn't it be sweet if she were one of the aides now forced to undergo periodic drug testing? For the three-star general she insulted that winter day was Lt. Gen. Barry R. McCaffrey, the most decorated man in the U.S. armed forces and now Clinton's drug czar. McCaffrey is the reason the administration has finally articulated a coherent anti-drug policy, and he is the driving force behind the administration's unexpectedly strong response to two invidious state referenda in Arizona and California that would make it easier for Americans to use illegal drugs. "He's the man on this issue for us," one senior White House official says, "and there's no secret about it."

WHAT BARRY MCCAFFREY DIDN'T TAKE SITTING DOWN WERE THE ARIZONA AND CALIFORNIA INITIATIVES EASING DRUG LAWS UNDER THE GUISE OF ALLEVIATING SUFFERING.

The Clintonites need him. One of the few times Bob Dole actually sank his teeth into Bill Clinton in 1996, after all, was in his evocative assertion that the administration was "AWOL in the war on drugs." According to officials who are most active in fighting drugs, it was a fair characterization.

While presidents get too much credit—and too much blame—for nearly everything that goes on in the nation's life, there was ample reason in this instance to hold Clinton accountable for the alarming increase in marijuana and other narcotics among America's teenagers. In 1992, 22 percent of high school seniors reported using marijuana during the past 12 months. This figure has risen in each year of Clinton's presidency and now stands at 36 percent. In 1992, only 2 percent said they were using pot daily; now, it's 5 percent. The same pattern holds for cocaine, heroin, LSD, and other drugs.

Why does Clinton deserve the blame? Remember that in 1992, the public's perception of Clinton's view of drugs came chiefly from his brother's troubles as a cocaine user, his own claim that he tried marijuana in college but "didn't inhale," and the notorious MTV interview in which he chuckled and said he would inhale if he tried pot again. After his election, Clinton's top advisers mused in public about moving the drug czar's office out of the White House, and one of his first official acts was to cut the staff of the drug czar's office from 145 full-time employees to 25. His surgeon general, Joycelyn Elders, spoke about the possible benefits of drug legalization, and after her son was busted for cocaine, she said he hadn't really committed a crime. Three months after taking office, attorney general Janet Reno publicly criticized federal sentencing procedures resulting in long prison terms for "minor participants" in drug deals. And last year, presidential spokesman Mike McCurry finally confessed what readers of the *Washington Times* knew right off the bat in 1993: that several of those Clinton hired as White House staffers confessed to recent or ongoing drug usage during FBI background checks and had to agree to undergo random testing in order to receive security clearances.

All of this sent a rather unmistakable message. When the *New York Times* interviewed 30 teenagers from Massachusetts and New York about drug use one month before the '96 election, Clinton's name kept coming up. "For him to say, 'Don't do drugs,' then to say he did it, but he didn't inhale, that's kind of a far-fetched story," a blonde 16-year-old from Gloucester identified only as Jennifer told the *Times*. "He must have tried it more than once," added Isa, a 17-year-old senior from New York. "I bet maybe 50 percent of the Congress has tried it. I mean, adults still use."

This was the mess Barry McCaffrey inherited early last year when Clinton tapped him to head the drug-control office whose personnel and power the president had slashed three years before. With his war record, his button-down demeanor, and his occasional bursts of temper, McCaffrey was seen by his military colleagues as something of a tough guy. They also considered him something of a liberal. In 1970, McCaffrey wrote a 30-page paper while teaching at West Point that predicted—and approved of—vastly expanded opportunities for women at the academy and in the rest of the armed forces. At West Point and various war colleges, McCaffrey was known for teaching young officers the absolute need to avoid human-rights abus-

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es in combat. Among his many decorations and prizes is an award from the NAACP.

In the Army, McCaffrey was known as a demanding officer who traveled easily within the two great cultures, the warrior class and the politically correct bureaucracy. In the mid-1960s, he had decided to go into medicine and was prepared to enter the pre-med program at Johns Hopkins when the Vietnam War escalated. The son of a general, McCaffrey did not respond the way so many of his generation did: Instead of hiding out in academia, he left school, enlisted, and volunteered for service in Vietnam.

As a young lieutenant, McCaffrey was wounded in battle and sent home. He volunteered for a second tour and was wounded again, this time seriously, shot in the left arm at point-blank range. After the war, he stayed in the service, rose through the ranks, and was serving as a two-star general in command of the 24th Mechanized Infantry Division when it was deployed to the Persian Gulf. McCaffrey led his tank division on the fabled 200-mile "left hook" maneuver through the desert, in which the 24th cut off, and then annihilated, the cream of the Iraqi fighting forces. The move was accomplished 15 hours ahead of schedule, with the loss of only eight American lives.

When the Gulf War ended, McCaffrey was given a third general's star to go along with his two service crosses, two Silver Stars, three Bronze Stars, and three Purple Hearts. He was assigned to the staff of Colin L. Powell, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which is how he found himself at the White House the day of the fateful snub. An incredulous McCaffrey reported the incident back to headquarters, and word of it spread quickly. Embarrassed by his handling of military matters in the first months of his administration and seeking to make amends, the president asked McCaffrey to go jogging with him during a Vancouver summit with Boris Yeltsin later that year. The two men hit it off, and soon McCaffrey got another promotion, a fourth star, and, ultimately, the drug czar's job.

McCaffrey took the post in an election year. By law, the drug czar is forbidden to participate in partisan politics, and so McCaffrey remained silent when Dole blistered the Clinton administration for its record on

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drugs. What he didn't take sitting down, however, were the initiatives in Arizona and California that eased the drug laws under the guise of allowing the terminally ill to smoke marijuana as a way of alleviating their suffering.

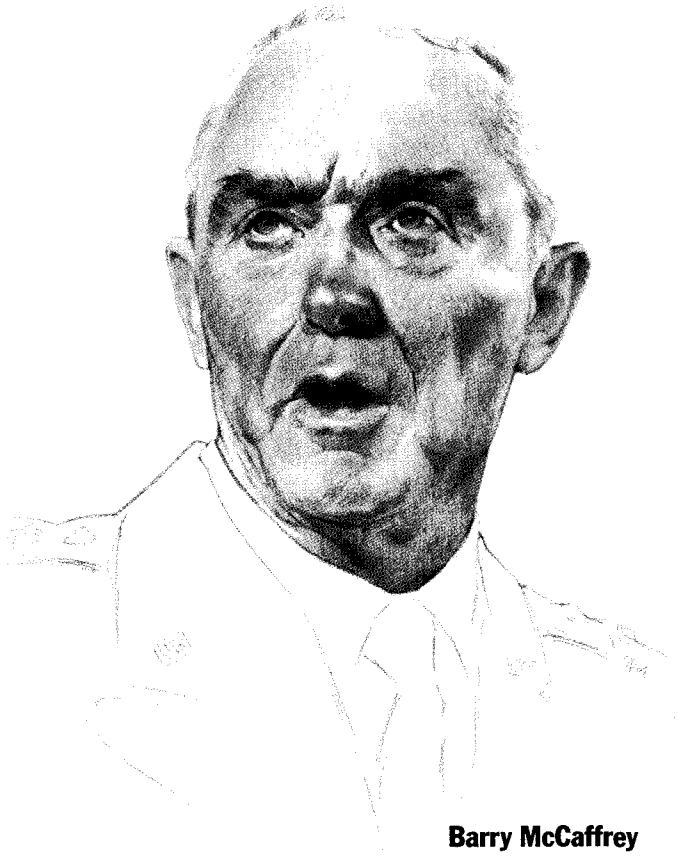
The "medicalization" of the drug debate is the latest strategy employed by Arnold Trebach, founder of the Drug Policy Foundation, and billionaire George Soros, both of whom have legalization as their ultimate goal. The legalization forces are now cleverly invoking the pain and suffering of the terminally ill to demonstrate their view that making the sale and use of drugs a crime causes far more problems than the drugs themselves.

Arizona's Prop. 200 has the effect of moving all federally categorized Schedule I narcotics—such as LSD, marijuana, and heroin—into Schedule II. Schedule I drugs are those with no recognized medicinal value at all. Schedule II drugs are deemed dangerous but have some legitimate medical use, like morphine.

Television advertisements trumpeting the initiative made no mention of these changes, since the makers of those ads clearly understood that voters would balk. Instead, the ads said Prop. 200 would actually require violent criminals to serve their full terms without parole. One ad even attacked "drug legalizers and liquor lobbyists." It was a cynical and dishonest pitch. "I defy anyone in Arizona to know what they were voting on," McCaffrey told me in a post-election interview.

In California, the ads for Prop. 215 tugged on heartstrings with images of cancer patients allowed access to marijuana in order to increase their appetites after chemotherapy. What the ads didn't say was that Prop. 215 was tailored to allow any "caregiver"—not just physicians, but anyone who classifies himself as a caregiver—to "recommend" pot to sufferers. There is no description of what constitutes a sufferer in need of marijuana relief. And it protects growers who are producing marijuana for such exempted users.

McCaffrey scoffs at the theory that any knowledgeable physician would prescribe a medicine ingested through the lungs. "Smoked marijuana—as a medicine—is sort of a joke," he says. Clinton, who campaigned extensively in both Arizona and California—and carried them both—said nothing against either proposition when his words might have changed the minds of voters (McCaffrey did, to no avail).



Barry McCaffrey

Chas Fagan

The day after the election, McCaffrey assembled his staff to formulate a response. The first step was to team up with transportation secretary Federico Peña and issue a warning that anyone involved in federal transportation would still have to remain drug-free or be fired.

The second was to bring a series of recommendations to the president, including one urging the DEA to pull the prescription-writing privileges of any physician who starts prescribing pot to his patients. McCaffrey and Health and Human Services secretary Donna Shalala are also getting ready to give official warning to any state that considers following the Arizona and California examples that to do so would jeopardize federal funding of drug-treatment and education programs.

Even before the announcement was made, top aides predicted that Clinton would sign off on whatever McCaffrey brought him. "The president trusts him," McCurry says. Of course, if Clinton had chosen not to trust McCaffrey on this one, that snubbing of the general might have made the 1993 snub seem like a nice walk in the park on a sunny, cloudless day.

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The War on the Military Culture

By James Webb

During the summer of 1975, a debate of historic proportions occurred on the floor of the House of Representatives. The debate was significant not because of its rhetoric, which was rather shopworn, or because the issue under discussion was dramatic—a bill mandating the admission of women to the service academies. Rather, the parliamentary methods used by the bill's proponents and their method of argument inaugurated a new era in civil-military relations and have dominated military personnel issues ever since.

The late Sam Stratton of New York, a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee and a proponent of the Equal Rights Amendment, introduced the measure directly on the House floor as a rider to that year's defense appropriations bill. With the avid assistance of several feminist legislators including Bella Abzug of New York and Pat Schroeder of Colorado, Stratton argued essentially that answering the question of whether women should be permitted to attend the service academies had nothing to do with the manner in which those institutions prepared young men for leadership in combat. Noting that "only" 90 percent of the graduates of those institutions had served in combat-designated billets (the others had been designated "not physically qualified" before graduation), Stratton argued that "the sole issue is a simple matter of equality. . . . All we need is to establish the basic legislative policy that we wish to remove sex discrimination when it comes to admissions to the service academies."

The debate added two new dimensions to the way the Congress and other activists would address military issues, particularly those affecting female assimilation. First, Congress took its vote without detailed legislative hearings that would have allowed the military leadership to express its views—a decision that, in effect, told America's military that its perspective was neither respected nor trusted where matters of progressive social policy were concerned.

Second, by focusing the debate on "simple equality" rather than the effect of injecting females into the already complicated and tension-enhancing environment of the operating military, Stratton and company managed to leave a much larger, more intangible, and far more complex issue on the table. And there it has lain ever since.

As a result, no effort has ever really been made to examine the issues raised by the ever-expanding sexual mixing inside the military's unique culture and its requirement of absolute fairness when it comes to administering punishments and rewards. The military is, at its core, a coercive institution, fraught with pressures and unwanted tasks. It relies on a code of conduct that demands egalitarian treatment in every aspect of discipline, recognition, and the subjection of its officers and its ranks to life-threatening risk. When double standards are introduced in matters of physical training and performance, they work against these very criteria.

Furthermore, the sexual jealousies, courtship rituals, and favoritism that are the hallmarks of romantic relationships are inevitable when males and females are brought into close quarters in isolated, intense environments. But these very phenomena inevitably corrode all notions of fairness as the military defines them.

These are matters of the utmost seriousness. They are at the center of most of the concerns regarding the assimilation of females into the military. And other than a hapless patchwork of unevenly enforced "fraternization" guidelines, they have never, not once in the 21 years since Sam Stratton's post-Vietnam gambit, been the subject of genuine scrutiny, much less a national debate.

Of course, many of those who voted with Stratton were not only seeking to provide opportunities for women where appropriate to the military's unique

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mission and operational circumstances, but were actively interested in undoing its historic culture. For those other than the quasi-revolutionaries who took delight in the chaos into which our country had fallen, the summer of 1975 in Washington was a bleak time. Following the embarrassment of our withdrawal from Vietnam, respect for military leadership was at its historic nadir. A year before, President Nixon had resigned in disgrace, and his resignation helped elect the so-called Watergate Congress, 76 Democratic freshmen in the House and eight in the Senate, with a surprising number of activists elected from formerly safe Republican districts. A majority of them had run almost solely on anti-military and antiwar themes. One of the first acts of the Watergate Congress was to vote down a supplementary appropriation for the beleaguered South Vietnamese military, virtually guaranteeing the collapse that occurred three months later when a refurbished North Vietnamese army launched a major offensive. All things military had become targets gleefully fired on.

Even with the restoration of American respect for the military in the 1980s, the effort to destroy the military culture from the outside has continued unabated, frequently through the use of "wedge" issues involving women. Major changes in female military roles often have been instituted either against the advice of the senior military or without their substantive input. Events such as the 1991 Tailhook debacle have been seized upon and used by feminists to attack the military culture and bring about major concessions.

Right now we are seeing this same drama being played out with the recent revelations of sexual abuse in the Army's sexually mixed training commands. The ink was not yet dry on the initial reports of drill instructors' having engaged in consensual and nonconsensual sex with female underlings before editorials and op-ed articles were excoriating the Army's "cultural" failings with respect to women. The secretary of the Army has appointed a commission to study the Army's cultural problems, a commission the *Wall Street Journal* recently reported is dominated by those who wish to expand female roles still further.

After two decades of such pressures, the time has come to examine the impetus and motivations behind these continuing attacks, and what their overall impact has been on the military as an institution that prevents, and fights, wars. What is it about the military that causes these persistent efforts to reach beyond a justifiable condemnation of incidents of misconduct and impute malice to the military culture—and especially military men—every time a problem comes up?

THE ASSAULT ON THE MILITARY CULTURE GOES BACK THIRTY YEARS, TO AN ODD DOVETAILING OF THE FEMINIST AND ANTIWAR MOVEMENTS.

The roots of this assault on the military culture go back thirty years, to an odd dovetailing of the feminist and antiwar movements. A principal focus of the antiwar movement, symbolized by its decision to march on the Pentagon rather than on Congress in October 1967, was to demean the notion of military service, as the surest way to discredit the conduct of the Vietnam war. At the same time, a frequent feminist argument was that politicians who used military service as a credential for election and advancement were unfair to women, who had no opportunity to gain the recognition that such service frequently provided.

Another important but rarely mentioned facet of this era is what former *Washington Post* reporter Susan Jacoby has termed the "mythic nonsense of the conscience-stricken young man who made the agonizing choice to stay home in the classroom while his brothers fought in the jungles of Southeast Asia." Such ethical gymnastics led Jacoby to wonder "whether the millions of men my age who avoided the draft may feel 'unmanned' in a way that no woman can truly understand."

As an example of the far-reaching impact of Jacoby's observation, consider Harvard. In World War II, 691 Harvard alumni were killed in action, but of the 12,595 who graduated from Harvard College in the years 1962 to 1972, only 12 died in Vietnam (and this even though ROTC units were in place at Harvard for most of the war). The so-called best and brightest from all the elite schools, whose predecessors had led the way in other wars, stayed home and went to graduate school as their peers marched off to suffer 58,000 dead. The dynamic of their collective but unspoken feeling of guilt, and its transference into a persistent diminution of military service, has never been fully aired in our national discussion, since those high achievers who did not serve soon moved into dominant positions in academia, publishing, film, and the media.

These important social forces came together with a vengeance following the Vietnam war. In its drive for

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ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, the feminist movement saw the military as its optimal "peripheral" battle. To win on the issue of women in combat, the most quintessentially male obligation in any society, would moot all other debates regarding female roles. For many males who did not serve, particularly the high achievers who wished no blemish on their reputations, the "demasculinization" of the military was a natural deterrent to any attack on their manhood as their youthful actions came to be viewed in retrospect.

Others who recognized the illogic of this social experiment, including numerous conservative icons, remained silent, for to speak out could be self-defeating. Given the nasty tenor of any such debate, their lack of military service would certainly be used against them—not by veterans and military officials, who would have welcomed their support, but by those who wished to stifle dissent.

As these political realities have developed, the military has had to struggle under its own set of unkind realities. Military leaders from their first days in training are steeped in a culture that accepts and believes in civilian control. And they are doers. A policy that was strongly opposed while under consideration will be just as strongly implemented once it is decided upon. Furthermore, generals at the three-star level are selected with (at a minimum) heavy participation from the civilian leadership, and those at the four-star level are chosen at the complete discretion of civilians, allowing politicians to shape the top levels of military leadership. When, as in the present administration, views on the expansion of female roles become a litmus test for advancement, arguments questioning accepted political wisdom are not conducive to the possibility of reaching the very highest levels.

Kevin Chadwick

With little support from the outside, and in a culture that demands performance, those "in the ranks" have learned that pointing out the difficulties inherent in an undertaking as politically volatile as the assimilation of women will quickly end a career. At the same time, enormous pressure is exerted on them to accentuate the positive aspects of this social experiment and ignore or diminish the negative. But male members of the military know that things aren't that simple. As is always true when people are asked to believe in and promote an image they know to be untrue, cynicism soon explodes. This cynicism feeds a backlash, which increases tensions even in areas where women perform well and where their presence is not counterproductive to the military's mission.

These hard realities have created the greatest potential cultural change in our military's history, and if matters are left in this state, we run the risk of destroying all notions of leadership as we have known it. The fundamental disconnect is this: In many areas where females have been introduced into the military, leaders imbued with the imperative of ethical conduct are constantly challenged to hold back on the truth or risk their futures.

And so politicians and media commentators usually end up arguing over only half the story. They are right to call for investigations of commanders who have not dealt preemptively with sexual harassment and unpermitted sex among members of their command. Women forced into unwilling sexual conduct are put into an inexcusable hell when their superior is the culprit, and there is no one to whom they feel they can report the crime.

But politicians and the media are blaming the wrong social forces for such problems. They have not been able to hear from those who have firsthand

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knowledge of what the sexual integration of the military has meant in matters of military conduct. Consider the commander who knows that the culprit in such situations is not one or a half-dozen individuals, but a system that throws healthy young men and women together inside a volatile, isolated crucible of emotions—a ship at sea or basic training, to take two notable examples. Whom does this commander tell if he believes that the experiment itself has not worked, that the compressed and emotional environment in which these young men and women have been thrust together by unknowing or uncaring policymakers actually encourages disruptive sexual activity?

WHOM DOES THE COMMANDER TELL IF HE BELIEVES THE EXPERIMENT HAS NOT WORKED? TO SPEAK HIS MIND WOULD LIKELY BE HIS UNDOING.

The commander knows the political mantra for twenty years has been that sexual misconduct is simply one more cultural problem, and that, like racial insensitivity, it can be overcome by a few lectures and command supervision. He knows also that this is wrong. But to speak his mind or force the issue would most likely be his undoing.

A case in point is Commander John Carey, who took command of the destroyer Curtis Wilbur after a fast-track start to his naval career. Soon after, Carey observed two female crew members kissing and spoke to the ship's command chief petty officer of his concern about the disruption such behavior would cause. "Captain," the master chief replied, according to the *Washingtonian*, "there's f—ing going on on this ship 24 hours a day, and there's nothing you can do about it." Carey tried to do something about it and was soon relieved of command for "physically and verbally abusing his crew."

This not-so-subtle pressure to look the other way unless conduct is overt and decidedly nonconsensual permeates civilian policy toward the military. In February 1988, shortly before I resigned as secretary of the Navy, I returned from a trip to U.S. military facilities on Iceland. During a staff meeting with secretary of defense Frank Carlucci, I reported that I had been informed that 51 percent of the single enlisted Air Force females and 48 percent of the single enlisted Navy females stationed in Iceland were pregnant.

Carlucci, who had announced in the first weeks of his tenure that he wished to remove the Reagan administration's policy of restricting women from combat, was unconcerned. "What else is there to do on Iceland?" he replied, drawing titillated chuckles from several sycophantic male military officers at the table. Needless to say, there was no follow-up on this or any other systemic failure, and the uniformed military was given the word through the grapevine that passes from Pentagon aide to general's aide and on down the line that, no matter what written policies might have existed, the leadership was not concerned about sexual fraternization.

The question becomes: Does it matter? And the answer is: In the military, it does.

It is difficult to explain to those who have not served in the operational military, and even to many military females who do not comprehend the ethos of units in which women do not serve, why the military is, and must remain, different from the civilian world when it comes to these issues. Next to the clergy, the military is the most values-driven culture in our society. I am not speaking of individual morals; many superb soldiers have been known as "liberty risks" when they are not on duty. Rather, it relates to an impeccable group ethos. Those who serve together must behave toward one another according to a set of unassailable and equally enforced standards—honesty, accountability, sacrifice, and absolute fairness in risk, promotions, and rewards.

The military is, in this sense, a socialist meritocracy. It functions not on money but on nonmaterial recognition. Do something good and you receive a good fitness report, an award, a meritorious mast, promotion to higher rank. Do something bad and you are reprimanded, court-martialed, jailed, demoted. You cannot quit your duties if you don't like your job or your boss or the place they're sending you. Even more astounding, you might be asked to die on behalf of a person or a policy you don't even like. In this environment, fairness is not only crucial, *it is the coin of the realm*. Fairness is the guarantee that puts credibility into rank, awards, and recognition. And such recognition determines a person's future.

The military was the first federal institution to create a truly level playing field for minorities. I grew up as the son of a career military officer in the newly integrated military, and I saw it work even through the difficult period of the late 1960s and early 1970s when I was a serving officer of Marines.

Now, to the extent that it is workable, the military has an obligation to provide the same gateways for females, and we should not lose sight either of the talent that many females bring to our armed forces or the wide array of federal benefits that are accorded them

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for their service in appropriate roles.

But neither should we delude ourselves into thinking that assimilation of females into military occupational specialties is the same as breaching racial and ethnic barriers. Eliminating cultural bias requires intellectual conditioning to break down old attitudes. But eliminating or neutralizing an attraction to the opposite sex requires much sterner and more imaginative therapy, and is probably impossible.

But that is exactly what will have to happen if the military is to work without disruption in the operating units where "group cohesion" is the key to performance, not to mention in the isolated environments of long-term deployments or basic training.

In these circumstances, it is essential that favoritism of all types be minimized and eliminated. But we all know there is no greater or more natural bias than that of an individual toward a beloved. And few emotions are more powerful, or more distracting, than those surrounding the pursuit of, competition for, or the breaking off of amorous relations. In the administration of discipline, benefits, and life-threatening risk, it takes an unusually strong personality to set aside passionate feelings in order to deny a spouse or lover a much-desired benefit or to expose that person to great risk. Nor is it possible to decide an issue in favor of a spouse or lover without at least appearing to be judging matters unfairly.

And there is another problem. Consider a ship on a long sea deployment of perhaps 100 days without a port call, a common enough event in our Navy's recent history. Assume, as is likely, that some members of a mixed crew begin sexual relationships while at sea. What of the rest? They will not have the opportunity to find a partner for months. The inescapable feelings of resentment, competition, or anger that follow create a powder keg of emotions that cannot help but affect morale, discipline, and attention to duty.

No edict from above will ever eliminate sexual activity when men and women are thrust together at close quarters. Watching civilian and military leaders struggle mightily not to see this verity, I am often reminded of Douglas MacArthur's observation, shortly after arriving in postwar Japan, upon being told that a large number of soldiers had taken up with Japanese women. Asked if such conduct should be curtailed, MacArthur demurred. "I would never give an order that I know I can't enforce," he said.

MacArthur knew that soldiers are usually young, physical, and aggressive, and that from time to time they will find ways to relieve their sexual frustrations with consenting females. But at night MacArthur's soldiers returned to their barracks. And when their units were called upon to perform their missions, the objects of their antics and desires were not right there beside them, confusing their notions of duty, discipline, and sacrifice.

Present-day generals and admirals, constantly under political pressure, sometimes unsure of where to draw the line between military and civilian control, often constrained by legal edicts, and wishing to be fair to those females who do perform well, have issued unenforceable orders rather than confront the politicians who dreamed them up. They have muddled about for years from incident to incident while many junior leaders have been forced to deal directly with impossible, ethically compromising positions.

And in one of the supreme ironies of the current debate, the same feminists who have long castigated military men, and even the military culture itself, for recreational antics with foreign women while on liberty, now defend or explain away such conduct if it occurs on post or aboard ship between consenting soldiers or sailors.

Who really wants to expand this continued sexual assimilation? A recent study of soldiers by Harvard researcher Laura Miller suggests that Army women do not. Only 3 percent of the enlisted women surveyed believed they "should be treated exactly like men and serve in the combat arms just like men." Sixty-one percent indicated a belief that sexual harassment would increase if combat billets were opened up to females. An equal percentage believed that women should not be drafted, or should be drafted for service other than close combat. Only 11 percent of enlisted women and 14 percent of the female officers surveyed indicated that they would volunteer for a combat role if one were offered.

SIXTY-ONE PERCENT OF ARMY WOMEN INDICATED THEIR BELIEF THAT SEXUAL HARASSMENT WOULD INCREASE IF COMBAT JOBS WERE OPEN TO WOMEN.

These are the realists who have lived in the powder-keg atmosphere. They know precisely what they want out of their military service. They also know precisely those circumstances under which unwanted difficulties arise. Many of them have rightly grown weary of being pawns in the grand schemes of sociologists, agenda feminists, and a small core of political-activist military officers, and of having to live with the often sexually abrasive results of such activism.

The time has finally come to cease examining these

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issues solely from the perspective of how the military culture should adjust itself to women. While women make valuable contributions on a variety of levels, the military is and always has been a predominantly male profession. Its leaders should demand that any adjustments in sexual roles meet the historically appropriate criterion of improving performance, and should stop salving the egos of a group of never-satisfied social engineers.

A return to normalcy might cause a retrenchment in areas where women serve. The United States might want to learn from other countries with their own experience of women at arms. After World War II, the Soviet army completely abandoned the use of women in the operating military (they had been brought in owing to the loss of some 7 million male soldiers in combat). The Israelis at several points during their recent history have adjusted the roles of females. Contrary to popular mythology, it is against Israeli law for a woman to serve in combat—and "combat" is a term interpreted far more broadly there than it is here.

A logical first, immediate step for the U.S. military to take is that basic training should be sexually separated, as it has been throughout history until just the past few years. Beyond that, each service chief should order, on his own initiative, a full and honest review of the extent to which current sexual practices are damaging traditional standards of command, discipline, fairness, and cohesion. Where damage is being done, policies should be changed. Where sexual mixing does work, policies should be enhanced. Such a review should not be within the power of civilian service secretaries or members of Congress to obstruct, since "good order and discipline" is the ultimate responsibility of each service chief—a responsibility that many would argue has been abandoned in recent decades when it comes to this issue.

If these senior leaders prove too hamstrung, too compromised, or too politicized to take such action, then the present Congress should take steps similar to those of its Watergate-era predecessor and begin the process of dramatic change itself. Except that this time, the change would be for the purpose of preserving military traditions, values, and leadership rather than subjugating them to external political agendas.

Political and military leaders must have the courage to ask clearly in what areas our current policies toward women in the military are hurting, rather than helping, the task of defending the United States. We have now endured two decades of experimentation, and data on the experiment's results would be voluminous if they were allowed to be examined. It has been a long time since a military leader of virtually any rank was free to speak openly about this without fear of retribution. And the difficulties surrounding the good order and discipline of our armed forces will not abate until the leaders themselves are encouraged not only to point to areas in which the new policy is working, but to speak honestly and straightforwardly about where they are not. ♦

What China Knows That We Don't

The Case for a New Strategy of Containment

By Robert Kagan

When President Clinton abandoned his 1992 campaign pledge to get tough with China, he quickly settled into that comfortable, bipartisan consensus of policymakers, politicians, Sinologists, and journalists who have long supported a policy of "engagement" with China. "Nothing is more important than integrating the rising power of China as a responsible member of the international system," writes Joseph S. Nye, Jr., until recently a top defense official in the Clinton administration. Bush State Department official Robert B. Zoellick agrees with

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Nye: "The challenge," Zoellick writes in the latest issue of the *National Interest*, "is to demonstrate to [China] that it will benefit from integration within regional and global systems."

The advocates of engagement—whom we might call "the new China hands"—offer a host of sunny assumptions about China's future and the helpful role the United States can play in shaping it. China wants to join our international order, the theory goes, or at least can be persuaded to play a responsible role in the world if only we help China's leaders understand what's good for them. By engaging with China, Nye argues, we can "affect how the Chinese define [their] interest." And as the Chinese come to view the world within the "larger context" we provide for them, "the prospects for conflict [will] diminish." China, Zoellick believes, "should welcome regional stability and the avoidance of contests for dominance."

Underlying these optimistic assertions, however, is a lurking fear: If we don't pursue engagement with sufficient zeal, we risk a catastrophic confrontation with China. To make their point, the new China hands ritualistically cite the cautionary example of turn-of-the-century Germany under Kaiser Wilhelm II (the period called "Wilhelmine Germany").

Wilhelmine Germany was a nation on the move, with a dynamic economy, increasing military strength, and a rising ambition both to settle outstanding international grievances and to play a role on the world stage commensurate with its new power. Zoellick argues that the "failure to deal effectively with Germany's rise led to seventy-five years of conflict." The new China hands warn that the failure to deal effectively with China's rise could have the same dire consequences.

And they insist that the lesson of World War I is that it is safer to accommodate than to contain an emerging power. "Germany then and China now," Zoellick writes, "are characterized by a mixture of arrogance and insecurity. Germany expected, and China expects, to be taken seriously." It follows that we must respect the wishes of China's leaders or face a disastrous confrontation. Containment is unthinkable—a very dangerous "pipe dream," according to Henry Kissinger. As Admiral Richard Macke, the one-time commander in chief of our Pacific Fleet, once put it, "What we have to do is make China one of our friends. We can't confront them, we can't isolate them." And so, whether the subject is human rights, China's reacquisition of Hong Kong, its efforts to regain Taiwan, the growing power of the Chinese military, nuclear proliferation, or any number of contentious issues on which the United States and China differ, the principal aim of U.S. policy must be accommodation, not confrontation. To succeed in our policy toward the Chinese, we must win their friendship and their trust, as the British presumably failed to do with the Kaiser's Germany.

The comparison of today's China to Wilhelmine Germany is apt—all too apt, in fact. It ought to be a cause for alarm and result in a wholesale shift of policy. For the story of how Europe dealt with Germany explains exactly why the current policy of engagement is so dangerous.

Great Britain, the preeminent power of its day, conducted the very policy toward Wilhelmine Germany that the new China hands would have the United States pursue toward China today. From the 1890s until the outbreak of war, British statesmen tried incessantly to engage Germany in discussions about cooperation in Europe, Asia, and Africa. They even explored the possibility of a formal alliance between the two nations.

But the German threat could not be lessened by accommodation. The international order led by Great Britain was by its very nature unacceptable to German leaders, who wanted a share of preeminence for themselves. Germany's primary aim, as London's top German expert at the time, Eyre Crowe, put it, was to play "on the world's political stage a much larger and much more dominant part than she finds allotted to herself under the present distribution of material power." The historian Paul Kennedy has argued that an even greater degree of British accession to Germany "might have papered over the cracks in the Anglo-German relationship for a few more years," but it would not "have altered the elemental German push to change the existing distribution of power."

The problem was not that Britain was too rigidly wedded to deterring and containing Germany. The problem was that Britain did not deter and contain Germany *enough*. In Crowe's view, Britain needed to take a "resolute stand" against Germany's challenge to the international order. Her Majesty's government had to undertake "all risks of a possibly disagreeable situation [rather] than to continue in the path of endless concessions." The British did not take Crowe's advice until it was too late to avoid war. If the analogy with Wilhelmine Germany tells us anything, it is that the best way to deal with a dissatisfied emerging power is not to adjust to it but to make it adjust to you.

So we must ask: Can Chinese leaders be coaxed into responsible membership in the international order? Or, like the Germans a century ago, do Chinese leaders see the international order as something that must be changed if they are to realize their ambitions,

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and changed in a way that diminishes America's own influence and security?

The Chinese leadership views the world today in much the same way Kaiser Wilhelm II did a century ago: The present world order serves the needs of the United States and its allies, which constructed it. And it is poorly suited to the needs of a Chinese dictatorship trying to maintain power at home and increase its clout abroad. Chinese leaders chafe at the constraints on them and worry that they must change the rules of the international system before the international system changes them.

In truth, the debate over whether we should or should not contain China is a bit silly. We are already containing China—not always consciously and not entirely successfully, but enough to annoy Chinese leaders and be an obstacle to their ambitions. When the Chinese used military maneuvers and ballistic-missile tests last March to intimidate Taiwanese voters, the United States responded by sending the Seventh Fleet. By this show of force, the U.S. demonstrated to Taiwan, Japan, and the rest of our Asian allies that our role as their defender in the region had not diminished as much as they might have feared. Thus, in response to a single Chinese exercise of muscle, the links of containment became visible and were tightened.

The new China hands insist that the United States needs to explain to the Chinese that its goal is merely, as Zoellick writes, to avoid "the domination of East Asia by any power or group of powers hostile to the United States." Our treaties with Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, and Australia, and our naval and military forces in the region, aim only at regional stability, not aggressive encirclement.

But the Chinese understand U.S. interests perfectly well, perhaps better than we do. While they welcome the U.S. presence as a check on Japan, the nation they fear most, they can see clearly that America's military and diplomatic efforts in the region severely limit their own ability to become the region's hegemon. According to Thomas J. Christensen, who spent several months interviewing Chinese military and civilian government analysts, Chinese leaders worry that they will "play Gulliver to Southeast Asia's Lilliputians, with the United States supplying the rope and stakes."

Indeed, the United States blocks Chinese ambitions merely by supporting what we like to call "international norms" of behavior. Christensen points out that Chinese strategic thinkers consider "complaints about China's violations of international norms" to be part of "an integrated Western strategy, led by Washington, to prevent China from becoming a great power."

It is difficult to see how China can be integrated into the international system through a policy of engagement when the system itself is viewed by the Chinese as a U.S.-designed scheme of hostile containment. "We want China to accept the rules," Zoellick writes. "We want China to perceive that adherence to norms of behavior will benefit it as well as others." But the Chinese have no intention of accepting integration on American terms. The Sinologist Kenneth Lieberthal admits that Chinese leaders want the world to accept "'Chinese characteristics' as part of the price of having the country join international councils. Though a new player, China wants to be a rule setter and not just a rule accepter." Unless the United States is prepared to change the international system it so laboriously constructed over the past half-century, China's current leaders are bound to be perpetually unhappy with American policies, even during periods when U.S. policymakers are trying to be accommodating.

For China's rulers, demanding that international "norms" be changed is a simple matter of survival—their own, not their ancient nation's. The system we uphold, and into which we would like to bring the Chinese, is deadly for them. They saw what happened to Mikhail Gorbachev and a 70-year-old Communist party dynasty when he tried to "integrate" the Soviet Union peacefully into the Western system. The Chinese regime depends on the suppression of liberty, and since the outbreak of the democracy movement in 1989 and its subsequent brutal suppression in Tiananmen Square, Chinese leaders have been determined not to repeat Gorbachev's mistake. Maintaining the unchallenged supremacy of the Communist party hierarchy has been their consistent policy. After Tiananmen, Deng Xiaoping declared that any effort to challenge the Communist party leadership and the primacy of "Marxism, Leninism, and Mao Zedong Thought" had to be crushed, along with any effort to introduce "the American system of the separation of the three powers."

Deng's reforms, which took full force in the 1980s, aimed at achieving the maximum economic growth with the minimum of political liberalization. That is a dangerous game, and Chinese leaders know it. Deng himself had to sack the two party leaders he chose to succeed him, Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, because they apparently strayed too far toward political liberalism. Perhaps he correctly saw them as potential Gorbachevs, who would wittingly or unwittingly allow the

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whole ruling apparatus to collapse in their search for "integration" into the West.

It's not so easy to enjoy the advantages of one aspect of the Western-dominated international system—trade and economic benefits—without becoming vulnerable to the potent ideological forces of the West. Ask Daniel Ortega or Slobodan Milosevic. Even when the United States and its Western allies have no conscious designs to undermine dictators, we exert pressure merely by our existence—both as a beacon of hope to those living under tyranny and as a vast machine for the global dissemination of information. The replica of the Statue of Liberty erected by the students in Tiananmen Square was tangible evidence of these abstract notions about the global consequences of an information age dominated by the democracies. Deng himself said the democratic uprising had been "determined by the international and domestic climate."

The Chinese leaders' profound fear of losing control can be seen in actions which make little sense to Western observers. They arrest and imprison student dissidents who, the Sinologists claim, have no mass following. They are willing to silence political opposition in Hong Kong even if it threatens the economic bonanza they hope to reap there upon taking over in July. Their enraged reaction to elections in Taiwan brought about a military confrontation they were bound to lose. These are the actions not of a confident ruling elite, secure in its mastery of a people who embrace authoritarianism, but of a nervous gang that knows better than we do how close it came in 1989 to losing everything.

Some new China hands agree that the Chinese regime is vulnerable and believe that increased ties will hasten the day when political liberalization finally catches up with economic liberalization. By embracing the Chinese, by exporting our Western ways through our Western goods, we will bring them down. By helping them expand their economy, we will exacerbate the contradictions of "authoritarian capitalism" and force their resolution in favor of more democratic forms.

There's a contradiction in this argument, one that suggests the new China hands are either naive or disingenuous. How can a policy of engagement that has as its explicit goal the eventual collapse of the regime appeal to China's leaders? Can the United States win their friendship by saying, "Engage with us so we can bring you down"? Chinese leaders are more aware than anyone that there are contradictions in their system, and they will not be comforted to know that America's policy of "engagement" contains the hope that they will be swept away by an uncontrollable tide of liberalization.

There is a Marxian foolishness to the argument that the transformation of China into a liberal democracy is historically inevitable. Political reform need not follow inexorably from economic reform if China's leaders recognize the danger and are determined to avoid it. The iron laws of modernization can be broken by a ruling elite that is ultimately more interested in power than modernization. American policy should rest neither on historical determinism nor on the misguided hope that China's leaders, having witnessed Gorbachev's fiasco, will walk blindly into the same trap.

In fact, they believe they have found a way to

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resolve the contradictions in their system, or at least delay indefinitely the collapse of their rule, by an aggressive appeal to Chinese "nationalism." On issues like the face-off over Taiwan, ordinary citizens seem to have been genuinely stirred up by anti-American campaigns in the Chinese media. And the "nationalist" card plays well abroad as another tactic for fending off foreign pressures to conform to international rules of conduct. Thus the new China hands warn that American failure to accommodate the Chinese on Taiwan and a raft of other issues will spark an incendiary nationalist backlash. Joseph Nye flatly blames U.S. policy for having "stimulated anti-American reactions in broad segments of the Chinese population."

TO RID CHINESE LEADERS OF THEIR SUSPICIONS WOULD REQUIRE CHANGING THE FUNDAMENTAL CHARACTER OF THE UNITED STATES.

But even those Sinologists who favor accommodation admit that the sources of Chinese nationalism are internal, driven by the need on the part of the leadership to replace communism with some other unifying ideology. Without the Communist faith, Kenneth Lieberthal says, Beijing's dictators have had to turn to "nationalism to tighten discipline and maintain support." For Chinese leaders interested in keeping power, nationalism is the necessary antidote to the political poisons unleashed by economic reform. Lieberthal warns that "should the People's Republic hold together and continue its economic development, yet still perceive major threats to its security and internal stability, it will more likely become a nationalistic bully on the regional level and an obstructionist on global issues."

But isn't that the likeliest scenario regardless of what the United States does or doesn't do? The United States cannot undo the *perceptions* of the Chinese rulers that China's security is threatened when the chief threat they fear is the international order the United States upholds.

Thus, the United States cannot ease the problems China's leaders face without fundamentally altering the present international order. The recommendations of the accommodationists would have just that result. They would welcome China into the G-7 group of leading industrial powers and into the World Trade Organization, regardless of how fully China meets the existing standards of behavior. They would use U.S. pressure to dampen democratically expressed desires for independence in Taiwan. They would "de-link" the issue of human rights from other aspects of the U.S.-China relationship once and for all. They would expand the ties between the U.S. military and the Chinese military and would avoid using sanctions in response to Chinese violations of agreements on proliferation and trade. Allowing China to join the community of nations without regard to its behavior as a member of that community would indeed change the principles of the international order to suit the needs of China's leadership.

But would even these concessions be enough? The answer is almost certainly no. To make the kind of accommodations necessary to rid Chinese leaders of their suspicions would, at last, require changing the essential character of the United States. The Clinton administration's top policymaker for Asia, Winston Lord, has complained that the United States appears to the Chinese and other Asians as "an international nanny, if not bully." But concern for the rights of peoples around the world is the product of America's universalist creed. The astonishing spread of democracy in the last 20 years owes a great deal to the way we threw our weight behind our beliefs. Even if we wanted to change this fundamental aspect of our national character, could we?

America's new China hands may be foolish enough to believe that the ideological chasm separating the present Chinese regime and the American people can be bridged or ignored, but China's leaders are more realistic. A 1993 document produced by the Chinese military summed up the situation bluntly: "Because China and the United States have longstanding conflicts over their different ideologies, social systems, and foreign policies, it will prove impossible to fundamentally improve Sino-U.S. relations."

It is worth recalling the historical analogy with which we began. As Paul Kennedy explains, Wilhelmine Germany could not have been appeased "unless the British were willing to accept a substantial diminution in national influence and safety." The new China hands wouldn't dare make such a grim recommendation to the United States. But the strategy of engagement—an effort to steer a middle course between appeasement and containment—may be the most perilous of all. It neither satisfies the demands of the emerging power nor deters that power effectively enough to prevent a serious confrontation. That is a fair description of the course Great Britain tried to follow before World War I, and Britain's experience illustrated a bitter truth of international affairs: Sometimes the policy that seems safest is the most dangerous, and

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the policy that appears most fraught with near-term risk offers the best chance of peace over the long run.

In the long Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, the years from 1981 through 1984 were a time of intense confrontation. Opponents of the Reagan administration's hard line clamored for accommodation, for ending the arms buildup, for a "nuclear freeze," for more summits, for "engagement." But the four years of tensions and confrontation were immediately followed by the most fruitful period of relations in Cold War history. The changes in the external and internal behavior of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s resulted at least in part from an American strategy that might be called "integration through containment and pressure for change."

Such a strategy needs to be applied to China today. As long as China maintains its present form of government, it cannot be peacefully integrated into the international order. For China's current leaders, it is too risky to play by our rules—yet our unwillingness to force them to play by our rules is too risky for the health of the international order. The United States cannot and should not be willing to upset the international order in the mistaken belief that accommodation is the best way to avoid a confrontation with China.

We should hold the line instead and work for political change in Beijing. That means strengthening our military capabilities in the region, improving our security ties with friends and allies, and making clear that we will respond, with force if necessary, when China uses military intimidation or aggression to achieve its regional ambitions. It also means not trading with the Chinese military or doing business with firms the military owns or operates. And it means imposing stiff sanctions when we catch China engaging in nuclear proliferation.

A successful containment strategy will require increasing, not decreasing, our overall defense capabilities. Eyre Crowe warned in 1907 that "the more we talk of the necessity of economising on our armaments, the more firmly will the Germans believe that we are tiring of the struggle, and that they will win by going on." Today, the perception of our military decline is already shaping Chinese calculations. In 1992, an internal Chinese government document said that America's "strength is in relative decline and that there are limits to what it can do." This perception needs to be dispelled as quickly as possible.

Containment would seek to compel Beijing to choose political liberalization as the best way to safeguard their economic gains and win acceptance in the international community. That is why trading freely with China is not the answer. Delightful as the idea of getting rich while doing good may seem to American businessmen, the truth is that unrestricted trade with China will only help the Chinese dictatorship buy time and put off the hardest decisions. Remember, Soviet communism was not brought down by trade. Nor was Chilean dictatorship, nor South African apartheid. In all these cases, only substantial *restrictions* on regular commerce helped convince leaders to risk democratic reform.

We need to force the Chinese leaders to make similar calculations of risk and benefit. That means we should deny most-favored-nation status as a way of putting pressure on Chinese leaders to open their system. We should block their membership in the World Trade Organization and the G-7 as long as they fail to live up to those organizations' high standards of economic and political behavior. And we should pay careful attention to the way the Chinese handle the coming transition in Hong Kong. When they crack down on pro-democracy forces, as they almost certainly will, we should be willing to use sanctions to punish them.

The new China hands often declare that the alternative to engagement with China is its isolation. It isn't. During the Cold War, the United States somehow managed to contain the Soviets and hold summits with them at the same time. But we will need to go through periods of bad relations with China. We cannot define a "good" relationship by whether the Chinese are happy but by whether we are effectively defending our interests and principles.

SOVIET COMMUNISM WAS NOT BROUGHT DOWN BY TRADE. NOR WAS CHILEAN DICTATORSHIP, NOR SOUTH AFRICAN APARTHEID.

This new China strategy may seem counterproductive at first, because Chinese leaders would surely respond to it in a fury and with threatening gestures. But over time it is the only strategy with a chance of success, and it is less likely to result in serious confrontation than the current confused combination of containment and appeasement.

The choice we face is not between containment and engagement, but between an ineffective, unconscious, and therefore dangerous containment—which is what we have now—and a conscious and consistent containment that effectively deters and ultimately does change China. To echo the advice of Eyre Crowe in 1907, what we need most is a "resolute stand." ♦

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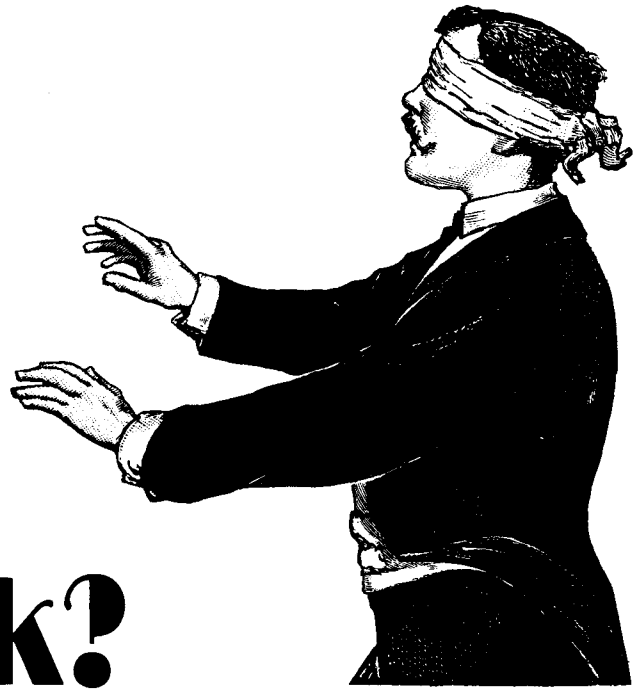
Why Are Catholics Walking In the Dark?



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"Mr. Fowler, He Live"

In Defense of the Second Greatest Lost Cause

By Joseph Epstein

From the living-room window of my sixth-floor apartment, I can see, less than half a block away, the headquarters of the world's greatest lost cause: the Women's Christian Temperance Union. I look upon it fondly, not because I am for bringing back Prohibition, but because I long ago enrolled in the world's second greatest lost cause: the careful use of English.

I was an unlikely recruit to this movement. I grew up without the least knowledge of grammar; the rules of punctuation were as clear to me as Mandarin Chinese. As a student who aspired merely to acceptable mediocrity, I wrote defensively, trying chiefly to avoid embarrassing myself, which I'm sure I didn't always succeed in doing. So how did it come about that I enlisted as a career soldier—a warrant officer, perhaps—in this second greatest of lost causes?

My interest in careful English followed my decision to become a writer, a decision that gave me a selfish stake in the English language, in keeping it clear and vivid and anchored in stable meaning. Hindus, I have somewhere read, feel that they must respect the earth, because, given the arrangements of reincarnation, they are likely to inhabit it again in who can be sure what other form.

We writers, with our preposterous hopes that our works will survive us, are in something of the same condition. Of what value can these works be if the very words out of which they are composed no longer have anything resembling solidity of meaning? To give but a small inkling of what I mean, poor A.J. Liebling wrote that his politics were "Let Paris be gay," a once lilting remark that nowadays requires a footnote stipulating that he didn't really mean *that* sort of "gay."

R.W. Burchfield, Ed.
The New Fowler's Modern English Usage
A Personal Interpretation
Oxford, 864 pp., $25

H.W. Fowler
Modern English Usage
Oxford, 725 pp., $24.95

One of the side benefits of trying to save the language is that you're never out of work. The English language is one vast San Andreas fault, where things are slipping and sliding every moment. The *New York Times* reports that a new publication called *Icon* considers itself a "thoughtstyle" magazine. (*Icon* is itself something of a misnomer.) *Publishers Weekly* mentions a new book titled *Brainstyles*. I have always thought "lifestyle," the sire of these hideous phrases, a pretty frightful bastard in its own right, but I had no idea it would bring such even more hideous children into the world. The moral is clear: Give 'em a finger and pretty soon they want the entire left side of your brain.

I think my passion for the correct use of language began when I first read Evelyn Waugh, whose novels demonstrate what precision can do for prose style. Simple correctness—with every word having the fine trimness of exact meaning—settles gravity on even Waugh's wildest comic scenes. How, I wondered, did one acquire the skill of using words in this way? The answer seems to be to use words to say what they mean—but *exactly* what they mean, nothing loose or wobbly, no small tiles out of place, no loose grouting or bubbly caulk.

I might have been a little less insane on this subject if I had not begun teaching at a university 23 years ago. My students, many of them very smart and keen in all other sorts of ways, have tended to treat language as if it were a game of horseshoes, in which one is expected to get points for being close to the stake. Close might include using *apprise* when *appraise* is wanted, or *surplice* when the word *surplus* is required. (Thanks a lot, Spell Check.) They are, my students, insufficiently impressed with the distinctions between such words as *jealousy* and *envy*, *eager* and *anxious*, *brutal* and *cruel*.

When students talk about characters in Conrad, James, or Dostoyevsky as being "caring" and "special," or refer to Anna Karenina's "mid-life crisis," I find myself fighting off the intellectual equivalent of a minor stroke. The little dears stimulated me, ill-educated as I myself was, to a high and, I hope, quite proper dudgeon.

Contributing Editor Joseph Epstein's latest short story, "Don Juan Zimmerman," appears in the January issue of Commentary.

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In a course with the title "Fundamentals of Prose Style" offered to would-be novelists, essayists, and poets, I introduce two sentences that between them contain five errors:

> Hopefully, the professor will not be altogether disinterested in the work on which I am presently engaged, which I believe is rather unique. But then everyone has their hopes.

My students have had a tough time finding the errors. They find instead several others that aren't there. Or if they succeed, they aren't sure just why they are errors. ("I remember one of my teachers in high school saying never to use 'hopefully,' but I don't remember exactly why.") Occasionally, a student will recognize that "disinterested" isn't the same as "uninterested." Rare is the kid who knows that "presently" isn't a synonym for "currently." I often have to point out that uniqueness represents an absolute condition, and that being "rather unique" is akin to being "rather pregnant"—either you are or you aren't. Finally, I usually have to inform the class that "everyone," like "anybody" and "everybody" and "none," takes the singular pronoun "he" or "she," or "he or she."

After putting students through this little torture, the first effect of which seems to be to discourage them about their own high valuation of themselves as users of the English language, I ask what difference any of it makes. The problem, certainly, isn't one of clarity, for the meaning of the two sentences, even with their five errors, is perfectly clear. The problem, I assert, is that of offending the educated—of looking a fool in the eyes of those who know better. The educated are a most touchy minority group, perhaps an endangered species, but there are still a few of them out there. But my chief point is that the best writers—rather like the best people—don't make such mistakes and that in making them one risks incurring distrust in all else one writes.

One of the difficulties—and simultaneously one of the glories—of English is that it is less rule-bound than other languages. In French, much syntax is prescribed, set out in stone, while in English every sentence is essentially a do-it-yourself kit. G.V. Carey, author of a slender volume called *Mind the Stop*, notes that punctuation is one-third governed by rule and two-thirds by art.

From where does the authority for such pronunciamentos derive? Chiefly, from tradition and from writers who have stepped forth—as they have done at least since the time of Jonathan Swift—to complain about the corruption of the language. Samuel Johnson, with the authority of being the great lexicographer of his age, was an early entrant into the field. William Hazlitt was another. Orwell got in his innings with "Politics and the English Language," and was always sensitive to the uses to which language could be put in the hands of tyrants and lesser con men. Edmund Wilson made it a habit to correct errors in the letters of his correspondents. In our day, the critic John Simon always takes a moment out to remark on solecisms in plays, movies, and books; he is a man who can find a grammatical error in a stop sign.

POOR USAGE MIGHT OFFEND THE EDUCATED AND MAKE ONE LOOK A FOOL IN THE EYES OF THOSE WHO KNOW BETTER.

Even though much of the defense of careful language is handed down by tradition, less than one might expect is encoded in books. Many people think that *The Elements of Style*, the pamphlet by William Strunk that E.B. White edited and added to in the 1960s, is a key book here. I have myself always thought Strunk & White, as the book is popularly known, sensible but overrated. Useful as far as it goes—telling its readers, for example, not to worry overmuch about the question of when to use *that* or *which*, but generally to use *that* except where it seems patently wrong to do so—*The Elements of Style* does not go anywhere near far enough. Too much on which one wants help is not included.

Something similar might be said about *The Complete Plain Words*, a book compounded of two earlier books (*Plain Words* and *The ABC of Plain Words*) by Sir Ernest Gowers. Gowers was a remarkable English civil servant, and *The Complete Plain Words* was originally written, at the behest of the English Treasury, to improve the clarity of communication by military men, local government officials, and the staffs of such public bodies as the railroads. It is a good book for its purpose, but that purpose, too, is rather restricted.

Style, by F.L. Lucas, is a splendid, too little known, and now out-of-print work on the subject of its title. Lucas, a Cambridge don very much in the English belletristic line, was a brilliant critic with considerable classical learning. "Our subject, then," he writes in *Style*, "is simply the effective use of language, especially in prose, whether to make statements or arouse emotions. It involves, first of all, the power to put facts with clarity and brevity; but facts are none the worse for being put with as much grace and interest as the subject allows." Excellent though it is, *Style* is really a book for pure writers, for would-be literary artists who already bring a fair amount of learning and cultivation to the task, a book that goes beyond the fundamental matters of correctness, lucidity, and force in the deployment of language and into the aesthetics of style, the dear, deadly little art of how to do it.

The great book in this line—great because both most helpful and intrinsically most interesting—remains *Modern English Usage* by H.W. Fowler, first published in 1926.

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Fowler (1858-1933) was one of those extraordinary people that only the England of a certain time could produce. A late bloomer, Fowler had first to fail (at least by his own lights) as a schoolteacher, a journalist, an essayist, and a scholarly editor before he found his true calling as lexicographer. He was a man of strong character and unassailable honor: He resigned from teaching because, not a professing Christian, he felt he could not in good conscience get students ready for confirmation; he returned journalist fees when his work wasn't printed; he enlisted in the English army during World War I at the age of 57 and resented not being sent to the front. When he turned to lexicography, he first worked with his brother Frank on a book titled *The King's English* (1906); and the brothers then turned out *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1911). Frank Fowler died in 1918.

H.W. Fowler had it in mind to produce a book that would deal exclusively with those idioms and other problematic aspects of language that exist in a condition of hazy understanding in the minds of even highly intelligent men and women. Oxford University Press viewed the project with the utmost dubiety. One reader's report called it "A Utopian dictionary [that] would sell very well—in Utopia."

As it turned out, Fowler's book went through four printings in the year it was released and is said to have sold 55,000 copies in the United States that year. That such a work, a mixture of dictionary and encyclopedia that is fairly technical in its approaches to its subject, could become a bestseller suggests a much greater concern among Americans of the 1920s about using careful English than is now the case. A goodly number of Fowler's entries had to do with correct pronunciation. To be grammatical, lucid, well-spoken generally was still, in the 1920s, a sign of good breeding, and hence of social acceptability.

What has made *Modern English Usage* so distinctive is that, with the possible exception of H.L. Mencken's *The American Language*, no other reference work has ever been so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of a single man. Fowler's authority came from within; his confidence in his good sense was supreme, and—a crucial point—not at all misplaced. His is a work filled with its author's idiosyncrasy, or "peculiar mixture," as Fowler himself defined the word in *Modern English Usage*.

Peter Steiner

Fowler has the reputation of a rigid authoritarian, a frigid schoolmaster, a late-Victorian prude, another English stiffo. But, as anyone who has ever rambled through *Modern English Usage* knows, he was a very witty man, splendidly flexible, most of whose views were based not on unbending rules but on solid good sense. The old boy was even, in his day, something of a radical. Consider his chapter "Split Infinitive," and recall that a split infinitive used to be considered an unshakeable violation. Fowler writes:

> The English-speaking world may be divided into (1) those who neither know nor care what a split infinitive is; (2) those who do not know, but care very much; (3) those who do know & condemn; (4) those who know and approve; & (5) those who know and distinguish.

He says of the first category, "Those who neither know nor care are the vast majority, & are a happy folk, to be envied by most of the minority classes; 'to really understand' comes readier to their lips & pens than 'really to understand,' they see no reason why they should not say it . . . & they do say it, to the discomfort of some among us, but not to their own."

Fowler concludes with the perfectly sensible judgment that it is best to avoid splitting infinitives wherever possible, but better split them than be forced into saying or writing anything ambiguous, artificial, or otherwise foolish.

"Sturdy Indefensibles," the title Fowler gave his chapter on ungrammatical ("It's me") or illogical ("It should not be taken too literally") idioms, strikes the note of common sense even more clarionly:

> Many idioms are seen, if they are tested by grammar or logic, to express badly, sometimes even to express the reverse of, what they are nevertheless well understood to mean. Good people point out the sin, & bad people, who are more numerous, take little notice & go on committing it; then the good people, if they are foolish, get excited & talk of ignorance & solecisms,

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> & are laughed at as purists; or, if they are wise, say no more about it & wait. The indefensibles, sturdy as they may be, prove one after another to be not immortal.

For "those who know and distinguish"—or, better, for "those who *want* to know and distinguish"—might stand as the epigraph, motto, and blurb of *Modern English Usage*.

The very name "Fowler" is of such value that Oxford University Press commissioned two new editions of *Modern English Usage* in the last 30 years, the first a lightish and respectful revision by Ernest Gowers in 1965. Now we have a second, much more substantial revision by R.W. Burchfield, who has been the chief editor of the Oxford English dictionaries and the editor of *The Cambridge History of the English Language, Volume V*.

Burchfield's book is orderly, sensible, filled with useful information. It is a book I am pleased to own and shall probably often consult. Yet it is not H.W. Fowler's. It may be called *The New Fowler's Modern English Usage*, but Fowler's spirit of playful seriousness is missing. For example, many of Fowler's best entries are buried behind odd and utterly idiosyncratic titles: "Elegant Variation," "Superiority," "Facetious Formations," "Irrelevant Allusion," "Stock Pathos," "Out of the Frying Pan," "Novelese," "Incongruous Vocabulary," "Wardour Street," and many others. The title "Wardour Street" derives from a London road that contained many antique shops, and is about antique vocabulary choices: "anent," "aught," "howbeit," "erstwhile," *et alia*.

Missing as well is the philosophy upon which *Modern English Usage* rests. Fowler believed that language was all we really had to keep the perpetually shaky ship of civilization on something like an even keel. There wasn't anything apocalyptical about Fowler, but he understood that only a small portion of humankind cared about language, and it was up to them to keep it in the best possible trim. Doing so, enlisting in this fine lost cause, his work implied, had the added virtue of being amusing.

Gowers, the editor of the second edition, understood this very well. He understood, too, that H.W. Fowler "was an emancipator from the fetters of the grammatical pedants that had bound us for so long." He recognized that "Fowler's true place is among the first of the rebels rather than among the last of the die-hards."

Burchfield has little of Gowers's enthusiasm for their predecessor. "What I want to stress," he writes, "is the isolation of Fowler from the mainstream of the linguistic scholarship of his day," and he adds that Fowler's original version of *Modern English Usage* is "a fossil all the same, and an enduring monument to all that was linguistically acceptable in the standard English of the southern counties of England in the first quarter of the twentieth century."

ONE READER CALLED FOWLER'S WORK "A UTOPIAN DICTIONARY [THAT] WOULD SELL VERY WELL—IN UTOPIA."

Some of the animus Burchfield seems to bear toward Fowler may be the normal rivalrousness of authors of works on the same subject. Burchfield has dropped several of Fowler's more famous entries, which, he writes, "no longer have their interest or appeal and are not preserved in this new edition. The material in them has been redistributed under much more transparent heads."

In some of the entries in his edition, Burchfield argues with, and on occasion puts down, Fowler. The article "Didacticism," for example, begins, "Fowler (1926), in an elegant but now dated essay characteristic of his generation . . ." Of the word "critique," he notes, "Fowler (1926) said of the noun, 'there is some hope of its dying out,' but it continues in use. . . ." A fair amount of sniping of this sort plays through the book.

The real conflict between the two, Burchfield and Fowler, is that the former is descriptive, the latter prescriptive, in impulse. Burchfield wishes to record, Fowler to make distinctions. Descriptive lexicographers tend to go with the flow, to be content merely to report, to side in linguistic matters with the populace. Reviewing the great "hopefully" controversy, which broke out in a big way in the 1960s, Burchfield remarks that "The unofficial war rumbles on" and, after lucidly setting out the arguments on both sides, ends by noting "the resentment [over all this] that is unlikely to fade away before at least the end of the" century.

Perhaps a better example is found in Burchfield's entry on "Intrigue," where he gives a history of the changed meaning of the word. It originally had to do with tricking, cheating, and deceiving, used first in connection with dealings between nations and among politicians, then spread out to amorous intimacy, and, finally (in the 1890s), took a sharp turn to mean "fascinated curiosity." Burchfield writes: "The new sense flourished to the point that Fowler (1926) declared it to be a literary critics' word 'of no merit whatever except that of unfamiliarity to the English reader.'" Burchfield then tells us what Fowler could not see—namely, that "the language shows an irrepressible liking for near-synonyms, and *intrigue* and *intriguing* in the new sense have found their way into acceptance, esp[ecially] in journalism and in domestic conversation." In short, the people have spoken, so Fowler (1926) is beside the point.

Burchfield is not without his own welcome opinions, biases, anger. He thinks "ironically," generally mis-

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used to mean "oddly," or "curiously," or "strangely," pretty sloppy, though now "it seems to be settling down into standard use, dragging ironical and ironic behind it." His position on "decimate," which originally meant to punish every tenth man and has now come to be practically synonymous with "devastate" or "destroy," is finally to draw the line on using it also to mean merely to kill, as in "physically decimating a person." This use, he writes, "is not recommended." He can live with "ongoing," but thinks "ongoing situation" a cliché "that signals a person's linguistic impoverishment" and hence not to be borne. Elsewhere he writes: "The use of all right, or inability to see that there is anything wrong with alright, reveals one's background, upbringing, education, etc., perhaps as much as any word in the language," adding, "The sociological divide commands attention."

No lexicographer can hope to keep up with all the oddities and misusages in a living language, so brisk is their traffic. Take the word "fun." Burchfield does capture fun in its new use as a quasi-adjective—"fun thing," "fun place," and the odious "fun couple." His book has not come too late for "venue," which once had a strictly legal meaning and now means any place where any event is scheduled to occur, so that one wonders if, in the singles bars of our day, an attentive eavesdropper might hear the utterance, "Your venue or mine?"

It did, perhaps, come too late to have an entry on "attitude," as in "Rodman has attitude, all right." Nor does it catch the typical American sports broadcaster's consistent misuse of differential, as in "the Sonics have come back from a differential of 18 points." I wish he had devoted a small article to "literate," a word that should mean nothing more than knowing how to read and write, but has now come to mean well educated and articulate, which is a bit preposterous.

Burchfield and Fowler do not always disagree, and I sometimes find myself disagreeing with both of them. Consider the difference—distinctly not the differential—between "each other" and "one another." Neither man thinks it any big deal; each is willing to walk away from insisting on any important distinction between the two, which holds that "each other" is used when no more than two things are referred to, and "one another" when more than two things are.

I happen to like the distinction between "each other" and "one another"; always use it in speech and prose; and tend to think of others who observe it as careful writers and speakers. Why? Is this mere snobbery on my part? Do I like to think myself superior for knowing and observing a rule that even the experts seem to feel is superfluous? I hope not. I have a love of such small distinctions. It pleases me that there are two such phrases as each other and one another and that each has a particular use, place, meaning. I deeply dig the sweet orderliness of it.

FOWLER'S "PLACE IS AMONG THE FIRST OF THE REBELS RATHER THAN AMONG THE LAST OF THE DIE-HARDS."

This love for order does not mean I always achieve it myself. It has not prevented me from being corrected by readers on points of grammar, semantics, pretension. Some while ago I received a letter from a man asking me why I always claim that books are "entitled" when the simpler "titled" would do the job nicely. I've decided he is right and have dropped the former. Another reader tells me that she much enjoyed a piece of mine in THE WEEKLY STANDARD but adds that "there is a misplaced modifier on page 34, in the sentence beginning "It was a small-press edition. . . ." And, damn it, it turns out she was right. Then one learns that people have strange biases about language—strange but not all of them nutty. Kingsley Amis once said that the word "workshop"—as in "poetry workshop" or "a workshop in self-esteem"—represents all that has gone wrong with the world since World War II, and he may have been onto something.

Where snobbery may come in is in my wishing to separate myself from the mass of my fellow scribblers by not using words that they have already exhausted. "Community," it seems to me, is such a word: Whether you say "Jewish community," "gay community," "artistic community," or "homeless community," none of it means a thing, for these communities don't really exist as communities in the root sense of the word. "Experience" took a similar beating a few years ago. It seemed a perfectly okay word till it began showing up in advertising copy that urged you to "experience GM's 2.9 interest rates," or "Experience the St. Regis," and restaurants began opening with such names as The Corned Beef Experience. Something similar is taking place with "driven" as a substitute for "motivated"—death by overuse. What happens to such words is that they lose their shape and meaning; they cease, as Virginia Woolf once said, "to absorb much truth."

In a world filled with bunco artists—intellectual, political, and artistic—all that a person has to defend himself is careful scrutiny of language. By the imprecision, vacuity, and insipidity of their language shall we know them. But deceptive language is not limited to that which politicians, salesmen, and other hustlers use on us; there is also that language we use to deceive ourselves into believing we understand the world around us, our relationships, and indeed ourselves. We are all excellent at conning ourselves, and

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there is no greater aid to doing so than language loose from its moorings—language handed on from social science and strained through the psychobabble of the putatively educated classes.

Burchfield doesn't think language has come loose from its moorings. "I refuse to be a pessimist," he concludes his preface to *The New Fowler's Modern English Usage*. "I am sure that the English language is not collapsing—more severe changes have come about in the past centuries than any that haveoccurred in the twentieth century—and in the English language, used well, we still have, and will continue to have, a tool of extraordinary strength and flexibility."

If Burchfield is a joyless optimist, Fowler comes closer to being a jolly pessimist. He knows the stakes are high. When we lose a word such as "disinterest," for example, we are likely to lose the *quality* of disinterest as well. Yet the pleasure Fowler took in his work is contagious. His book enlivens one's spirit. Reading him, one feels happy.

Language will, of course, change in all sorts of odd and unpredictable ways, some among them wonderfully felicitous. But distinctions need to be made between words that are alive and useful and words that are worn-out or empty to begin with. Not to make these distinctions is to watch our language march directly into a swamp from which it may not easily emerge without great bits of gunk all over it. H.W. Fowler felt it his place to cry out at the spectacle of language gone awry, and did so more sensibly and wittily than anyone before or since his time. That is why the first edition of *Modern English Usage* is likely to have a much longer life than R.W. Burchfield's third edition. ♦

THE MURRAY MANIFESTO

Trying to Make a Case for Libertarianism

By Daniel Casse

It's a safe bet that on any given night, somewhere a group of American college students is engaged in a heated debate over the legalization of drugs, the ethics of seat-belt laws, or the absolute right of consenting adults to do whatever they please in their homes.

Charles Murray
What It Means to Be a Libertarian:
A Personal Interpretation
Broadway Books, 192 pp., $20

That experience, along with a brief infatuation with Ayn Rand, is probably the most prolonged exposure educated Americans have to libertarian thinking. Despite prominent champions such as Milton Friedman and Richard Epstein, libertarianism has never made it into the country's mainstream political or intellectual trends.

There is some justification for this. The organized libertarian movement has frequently been overshadowed by its own fringe elements and half-baked ideas. Some years back, for example, the libertarian magazine *Reason* published a cover story extolling polygamy. In 1994, Howard Stern was nominated the libertarian candidate in the New York gubernatorial race. Every four years the national libertarian party convention finds itself embroiled in a public dispute over what age children should be permitted access to whiskey. These hijinks have made libertarianism appear sophomoric at best and anarchic at worst.

Charles Murray, the author of *Losing Ground* and *The Bell Curve*, two of the most-discussed books of the last 15 years, has taken on the task of presenting a more sober, respectable libertarianism. *What It Means to Be a Libertarian* is an attempt to argue that a state premised on libertarian principles is not merely a theoretical ideal, but a practical alternative. He has written not a philosophic treatise on libertarianism, but a policy book in the form of a sustained argument. For both college students debating in their dorm rooms and free-market Republicans who are seeking the next step in limited government, Charles Murray's book is a guide to what libertarian policy demands, and why it would make the country better off.

That is a worthwhile undertaking, but the resulting book is neither inspiring nor ultimately persuasive. The fault does not really lie with Murray, who is one of the most elegant prose stylists when it comes to complex matters of public policy. The problem is with libertarianism itself. This book will remind many readers why the philosophy has never really succeeded in the United States, and why it is unlikely to achieve critical mass any time soon.

Murray begins by focusing his reader on what he understands to be the aims of libertarian thinking. He believes in limited government and wants to restore classical liberal ideals to American life, but does not call for a minimal-state paradise, as Robert Nozick did in his influential book *Anarchy, State and Utopia*. He is not especially troubled by the powers of the Federal Reserve Bank, the size of the American military, the influ-

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ence of mental-health professionals, or other libertarian bugaboos. He writes, instead, in the tradition of Jefferson, Adam Smith, and Edmund Burke. His vision of a better America is one with more "little platoons," not rampant radical individualism.

He argues that most government functions offered in the name of "the public good" interfere with the honest man earning a living and minding his own business. Government robs him of his responsibility, and individual responsibility is Murray's most constant theme. Throughout *What It Means to Be a Libertarian*, he emphasizes that responsibility is not the "price" of freedom, but rather its reward. Satisfaction in life comes from taking responsibility; it is the fullest meaning of the "pursuit of happiness."

Murray's vision of government would certainly foist many new responsibilities on Americans. He sketches a brief outline of what a libertarian government might look like: no regulations of products or services, and none for the workplace or for the relationship between employee and employer. Civil-rights laws would be replaced by constitutional amendments prohibiting any government discrimination or laws that interfere with private freedom of association (federal affirmative action would be gone, and a private employer could refuse to hire blacks). There would be no agriculture subsidies. No Energy Department, no Medicare, no poverty programs, no Post Office or Federal Communications Commission. No Social Security. This lean federal government would be left only with the responsibility of patents and copyright, maintaining the interstate highway system, restricting the export of military equipment, and (although he does not mention it) a federal court and law-enforcement system.

Murray then devotes the middle section of his short treatise to explaining how a libertarian government would work and why it would improve the quality of American life. He applies the general argument readers first encountered in *Losing Ground*: Government invariably is less efficient at solving problems than citizens who are forced to work things out on their own. By interfering, government displaces individual responsibility and makes civic institutions less necessary. In most instances, attempts by government to fix a problem have made things worse.

Charles Murray

Chas Fagan

So, for example, Murray argues for replacing cumbersome product-safety laws with the simple application of contract and tort law; people should be able to sue manufacturers whose products don't work under ordinary circumstances. In more sensitive areas like food, safety, and banking regulations, he suggests letting businesses have the option of exempting themselves from government rules and advertising themselves as "unregulated" businesses. Private organizations could emerge to verify the safety of drugs or oversee air traffic. People would be given the information, weigh the risks, and make their choices.

Murray would like to extend those same choices—and the risks and responsibilities that go with them—to education, health care, and welfare. He argues for completely unrestricted education; a free-market medical system that encourages people to purchase catastrophic health insurance; and the elimination of all government assistance and transfer programs. In their place, he would like to see the revival of informal, community organizations whose historical record in helping the poor is far better than government's.

Readers who like what they hear so far may part company with Murray when he gets to the subject of addictive drugs, which he believes a free society should legalize (along with prostitution and pornography). Parents who are really concerned about their children's drug use, he

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argues, should be able to choose a school that expels any kid who uses drugs. If employers want drugs out of their workplaces, they should be free to institute rigid anti-drug policies. In Murray's libertarian vision, drugs, like so many other social problems, are best dealt with by requiring citizens, not government, to take primary responsibility.

This part of Murray's argument awakens us to what happens when libertarian principles run head-on into bourgeois reality: The extremely limited government described in his book may not make for a very attractive place to live. The importance of personal freedom notwithstanding, most Americans loathe the idea of living in a country where heroin and cocaine are as legal as cigarettes. They want police to crack down on prostitution in downtown neighborhoods. They do not want to contemplate a society where the most troublesome chronic welfare families are left to fend for themselves. However critical we may be of existing government programs, there is no doubt that life under Murray's regime would be uncomfortable, less stable, more risky, and require more effort from ordinary citizens.

Are Americans, even those who are strong advocates of unfettered free enterprise and individual rights, willing to accept that type of society? Murray argues at the conclusion of his book that a coalition exists of people who just want to be left alone. But the influence of such a coalition is easy to exaggerate. True, most Americans do want to be left alone—in theory. In practice, they show little enthusiasm for the sort of stripped-down government Murray proposes.

That is not to say that Americans are blithely marching down the road to serfdom. But neither do they view our collection of costly, inefficient, and poorly managed programs as the primary threat to liberty and self-government.

And they are right. Federal farm programs, to cite a favorite target of libertarian ire, are certainly an example of big-government meddling. Yet despite them, America has developed the most efficient and productive agricultural system in the world. Similarly, government regulation is undoubtedly a drag on American business. Nonetheless, in the last two decades American entrepreneurs have managed to create a software and computer industry without rival.

Or consider Social Security and Medicare. They are outdated and fiscally unsustainable programs that have probably created a disincentive to save for retirement. But they have virtually eliminated poverty among the elderly (and in the case of Social Security, done so with remarkable efficiency). There is, as the last election proved, no demand to abandon them wholesale outside of libertarian intellectual circles.

The much stronger (and more popular) case for radically scaling back our federal government is that it often creates all the wrong incentives. That was the central idea of *Losing Ground*: A welfare system designed to promote independence wound up paying poor people not to work and not to marry. Implicit in that argument was a counter-argument: A government that was capable of sending the wrong messages might be capable of sending the right ones.

Across the country, the lessons of *Losing Ground* have been absorbed as a dysfunctional welfare system is slowly being dismantled. But the

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response has often been not less government, but *more* of it: workfare for welfare recipients; drug testing requirements for public assistance; curfews for teenagers; anti-loitering laws; intensive community policing; metal detectors and uniforms at public schools; restrictive zoning for adult book stores; orphanages for the children of habitually abusive parents.

We don't know whether any of these experiments will work, and libertarians are justified in being suspicious of some of the Big Brother aspects of the "civil society" movement. What we do know is that Americans engaged in trying to create more responsible, safer communities of self-sufficient citizens have little patience for libertarian purity on matters like drug legalization and the dangers of paternalism. When Americans read about babies abandoned by teen-age mothers on crack, they want more paternalism, not less of it.

Of course, government spending and regulation at any level can always benefit from a heavy dose of free market thinking. On this score, Murray's policy arguments make the most sense. Yet for the most intractable problems the country faces—long-term welfare dependence, teen drug addiction, a failed public school system, violent crime, and even domestic terrorism—laissez-faire ideology seems beside the point.

For better or worse, America has become a more complicated and less manageable country in this century. In an interview with *Reason* two years ago, James Q. Wilson was asked what government will look like in the next century. "It's going to be bigger, more complicated, more burdensome, and more costly," Wilson said. "No matter what point in human history you ask that question, the answer is always the same."

This unavoidable truth about government is what Murray never fully confronts in *What It Means to Be a Libertarian*. The sheer magnitude of the problems that government now fumbles with may militate against the voluntary and private solutions that worked during the early part of this country's history. No reader will argue with Murray's ultimate goal of creating a society that relies more on individual responsibility than on government. But today, the movement toward limited government demands a way to promote and guarantee individual responsibility—something that cannot be found in even Charles Murray's thoughtful case for libertarianism. ♦

DIARY OF A MOVIEGOER

Eight Films, Five Days, and Only Two Stinkers!

By John Podhoretz

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22. I'm in New York City, which is the best place to be when you're a Jew during Christmas week. As American families gather, the entire country seems to shut down for a few days—all except New York, where Jews constitute a larger percentage of the population than in any other city on the planet outside of Israel. And just as believing Christians make their way to church to celebrate the Birth, Jews in New York seek the company of others in a different kind of congregation called a movie theater. For during Christmas week in New York City, Jews go incessantly to the movies, two or three times a day. Theaters open early and close late to handle the traffic, and coffee bars make a killing.

Given the fact that every year this decade has outranked its predecessor as the worst twelvemonth in the history of cinema, there was little reason to hope that the 1996 Christmas season would bring comfort and joy to this passionate and lifelong moviegoer. I have found myself so disenchanted by moviegoing that I have been mostly absent this year from the darkened auditoria where I have spent much of my life. For two decades, I saw almost every movie released in theaters, in all languages and of all types (with the exception of pornography and those films featuring Robby Benson or Kim Basinger, both of whom have the effect of making me wish I were anywhere else, even in a periodontist's chair). By the time 1995 rolled around, there seemed precious little pleasure to be had from moviegoing. And this year only a few films were in any way revivifying—*Fargo*, *Lone Star*, *Twelfth Night*, *Richard III*, *Jerry Maguire*. But it is Christmas week in New York, and I am a Jew, and so to the movies I must.

The binge begins at 4:30 on this cold afternoon with *One Fine Day* at the 34th Street East, the theater where I saw *Jaws* in 1975. *Jaws* inaugurated the era of the blockbuster—in our time, a hit movie makes more money than anyone ever dreamed a movie could, and that, in turn, has led to the systematic and systemic dumbing-down that makes going to the movies such a chore.

But wait: *One Fine Day* proves unexpectedly interesting and moving. Two single parents, Michelle Pfeiffer and George Clooney, "meet cute" one rainy morning and find themselves in a child-care crisis on a crucial day in both their professional careers. She is a harried architect and

Deputy Editor John Podhoretz appears regularly on CNN's "Reliable Sources," which airs at 6:30 p.m. Eastern time on Sundays.

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control freak with a gigantic chip on her shoulder; he is a good-time newspaperman who uses oceans of charm to make up for his unreliability. They end up watching, running after, and even losing each other's kids all over Manhattan as they save their careers and, in a wonderful concluding image, fall asleep together on her couch for the first time in what will presumably be a happy married life.

One Fine Day has some good lines, sharp direction by Michael Hoffman (who made the funniest movie of the decade, *Soapdish*, and if you don't believe me, rent it), and a strangely sober mood for a comedy that gives it surprising force. Mostly, it has Pfeiffer and Clooney, who prove yet again that there are few things as enjoyable as watching two impossibly glamorous Hollywood stars pretend that they have the same problems you and I do.

Later, I head out to a 9:45 showing of *The Crucible* at the Baronet, where I once sat in the first row and craned my neck at an impossible angle to watch *Taxi Driver*, a movie that is especially striking to see 20 years after its first release because it is ambitious and dark in a way that no major Hollywood release could possibly be these days. I expect to be angered by *The Crucible*, because the Arthur Miller play from which it is adapted draws an appalling parallel between the Salem witch trials and the investigation of Communist influence in America in the 1950s—appalling because while there were no witches in Salem, there certainly were Communists and among them were people, like Julius Rosenberg and Alger Hiss, who may have done their country significant harm.

It turns out that *The Crucible* is really good. The offensive parallels to Joseph McCarthy hardly matter here, for director Nicholas Hytner has found true heart and soul in Miller's agitprop. The movie builds slowly and well until, at around the first hour, it grabs you by the throat and does not let you go until it is over an hour and a half later. And its last 10 minutes feature a piece of acting by its leading man, the masterful chameleon Daniel Day-Lewis, that is so heartbreaking and powerful I cannot quite recall its equal.

Monday, December 23. After taking in a Broadway musical at 8 p.m., I find myself walking through Times Square, once the self-described entertainment capital of the world, later the armpit of the world, and now the biggest, fanciest tourist trap in the world besides Vegas. On the site of the once-glorious Loews State on Broadway, a movie palace that seated 1,500, there is now a Virgin Megastore—the largest entertainment store in the world, they tell you as you enter. Three levels down, tucked inside the Megastore, is a multiplex. I put down $8.50 for the 11 o'clock showing of *Mars Attacks!* and sink once again into the slough of moviegoing despond from which I briefly emerged yesterday.

For this ill-considered and desperately unfunny spoof of 1950s science-fiction movies and 1970s disaster movies Hollywood put up $70 million? The central joke is that every big star in the large cast is killed by Martians—a trope that suggests the ways in which the nihilism that defines post-modernism has infected even the Hollywood blockbuster. Its director, Tim Burton, spent $17 million to make *Ed Wood* two years ago, easily the best movie of his career and so controlled in tone and spirit that it seemed at the time a rebirth for this immensely gifted but off-puttingly bizarre filmmaker. Maybe not, judging from *Mars Attacks!*

Tuesday, December 24. The choice this afternoon, given the exigencies of starting times, is between *Shine*, a highly praised Australian film, and *The English Patient*, a highly praised British film. I loathed the ludicrous and overripe novel on which *The English Patient* is based, so *Shine* it is to be—only on the way to the theater my heart sinks at the thought of two hours in the dark watching a schizophrenic pianist with a cruel Holocaust-survivor father. I make a last-minute detour into *The English Patient*—and, again to my surprise, it is quite wonderful. Gripping, deeply romantic, beautifully acted, magnificently photographed, *The English Patient* is set up like a mystery whose secret you find out only in the last few minutes. Unfortunately, that secret is ridiculous—something about how nations should be like lovers, with no boundaries between them, an idea that is actually used to excuse the actions of a Nazi spy. But at least it ruins only the last 30 seconds of an otherwise thrilling movie. I am only glad I didn't go to see *The English Patient* with a girlfriend, because its conclusion would inevitably provoke the kind of question to which there is no correct answer: "Honey, would you have betrayed the Allies for me?"

At 11 p.m. I walk over to the Orpheum, where I was taken at the age of 12 to see *The Sting* on its opening day and first discovered the truth about what Jews in New York do on Christmas. Tonight's entry: *Beavis and Butt-head Do America*. We right-wing nuts love to task liberals with being politically correct and praise ourselves for our incorrectness, but if you want to see the true faces of the politically incorrect, you need look no further than the animated visages of Beavis and Butt-head. Mike Judge's movie is a remarkably sustained explosion of jokes at everybody's expense—from a hippie schoolteacher who entertains his class with a rendition of a folk song called "Lesbian Seagull," to an overzealous FBI agent who is more than ordinarily interested in the prospect of cavity searches.

And then there are Beavis and Butt-head themselves, two teenage boys who are so unbelievably stupid,

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single-minded, and oblivious that they think a hit man's $10,000 offer to "do his wife" means they will be flown to Las Vegas and given 10 large to lose their virginities. Uninterested in anything but MTV videos, of which they have an encyclopedic knowledge, they wander through the United States like two unholy innocents and inadvertently save the world in the process.

Wednesday, December 25. The day has arrived. You cannot get into a movie to save your life on Christmas, because Jews are not the only ones packing the theaters—after the presents are opened, the Gentiles come out in force too. The solution: TeleTicket. I called yesterday and charged seats for *Mother* and *Michael*, both of which open today, for me and my parents.

We feel superior as we waltz ahead of the long line waiting in the bitter cold for the 11:15 showing of *Mother*. It has been co-written and directed by its star, Albert Brooks, who made two of the most memorable and chilly comedies of the 1980s, *Modern Romance* and *Lost in America*. I don't like *Mother* very much, though there's a lot of funny stuff in it, because it's far too pat—a writer who can't get along with women moves back in with his withholding mother and discovers that she has always envied him because she had to give up a writing career when she got married and had children. All this comes out in a long scene at the movie's end that plays like a really bad depiction of a catharsis during therapy. Still, it's offbeat and it's at least trying to get at something interesting.

"*Michael* is sold out!" the usher announces at the Beekman, where I first went proudly alone and unsupervised to a movie—I was eight years old and the film in question was *The Maltese Bippy*, a horror parody starring Rowan and Martin of *Laugh-In*. TeleTicketed, we march in again and get just the seats we like, fourth row on the aisle. *Michael* is immensely enjoyable, a movie about an angel on his last trip to Earth and his mission to bring a cynical journalist back to life. The teaming of John Travolta as the angel and William Hurt as the reporter is memorable—Travolta makes you love his character, and Hurt makes you respect his, and the two different qualities give Nora Ephron's meandering road movie a spine.

Ralph Fiennes and Kristin Scott Thomas in The English Patient

Thursday, December 26. I have to catch a plane back to Washington, but before I do there's time for one last movie: *Marvin's Room* at the Lincoln Square, the most elaborate new movie complex in Manhattan, five floors of comfortable and attractive theaters topped off by a gigantic Imax triplex. I am here under protest; I wanted to see *I'm Not Rappaport*, because Walter Matthau is in it and he is my favorite film actor of all, but my father vetoed it on account of Matthau's character is an old Communist and the whole thing would give him apoplexy.

When *Marvin's Room* ends, my father dutifully proffers a very well-deserved apology. Because no matter how bad or infuriating *I'm Not Rappaport* is, it couldn't possibly hold a candle to the sickening treacle that is *Marvin's Room*. Diane Keaton is the saintly sister taking care of her infirm father and aunt. Meryl Streep is the slatternly sister with two teenage sons she is raising badly. Diane Keaton is dying, and Meryl Streep and her boys come to have their bone marrow checked out to see if they can save her. Leonardo di Caprio, who was so awful as Romeo in the recent travesty of *Romeo and Juliet*, outdoes himself as a petulant pyromaniacal teenager. This is the kind of movie that makes you wonder why you aren't home, watching daytime soap operas and Jenny Jones.

So, the final tally: eight movies in five days. Two of them genuinely impressive (*The Crucible*, *The English Patient*), two touching (*One Fine Day*, *Michael*), one very funny (*Beavis and Butt-head*), one kind of funny (*Mother*), two just awful (*Mars Attacks!*, *Marvin's Room*). My faith in the movies is renewed. Joy to the world. ♦

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The White House released a report, complete with chart, of what it said are the ways in which anti-Clinton allegations make it into print through the conservative media.
—*News item*

Parody

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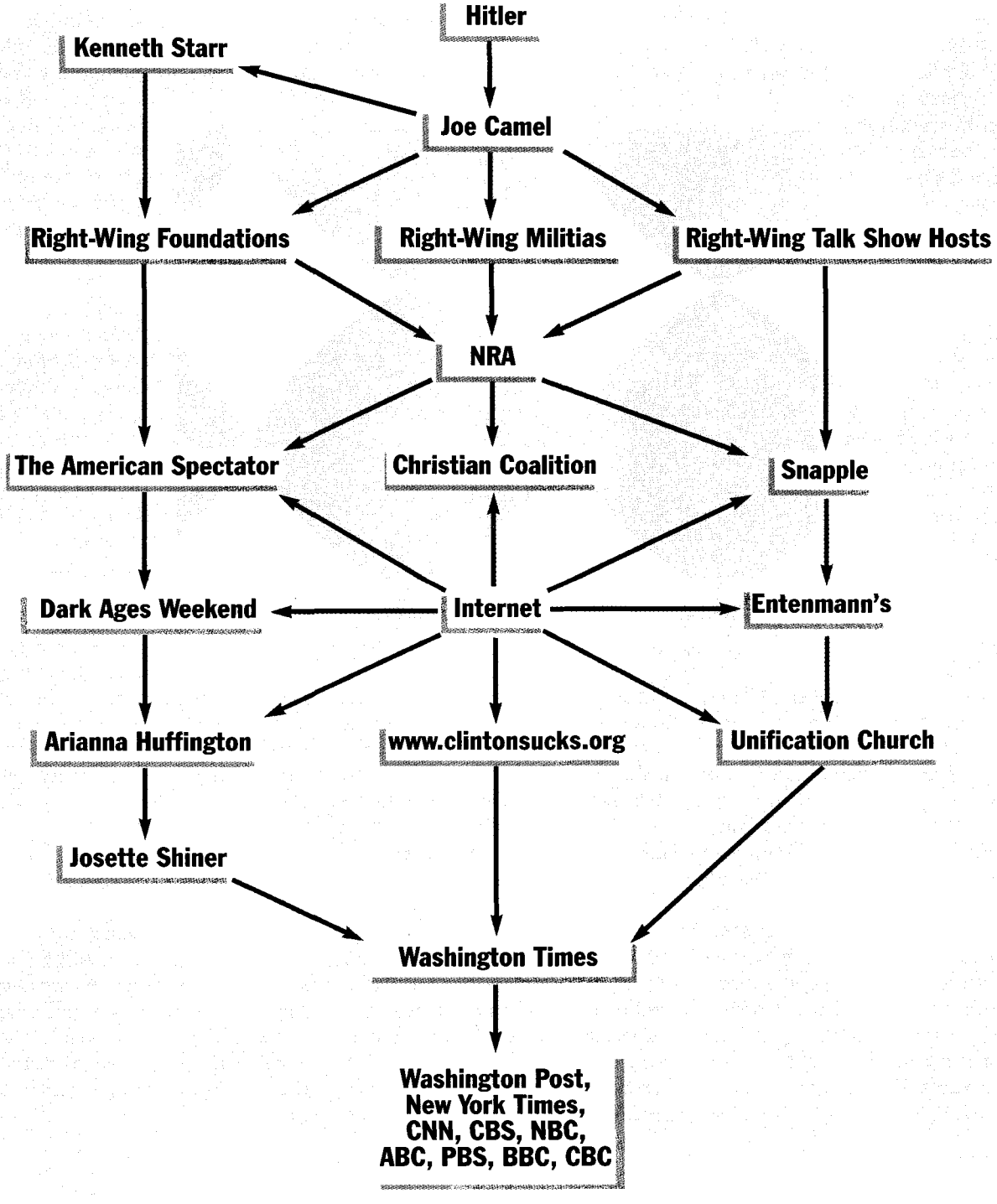
Draft 1
by James Carville



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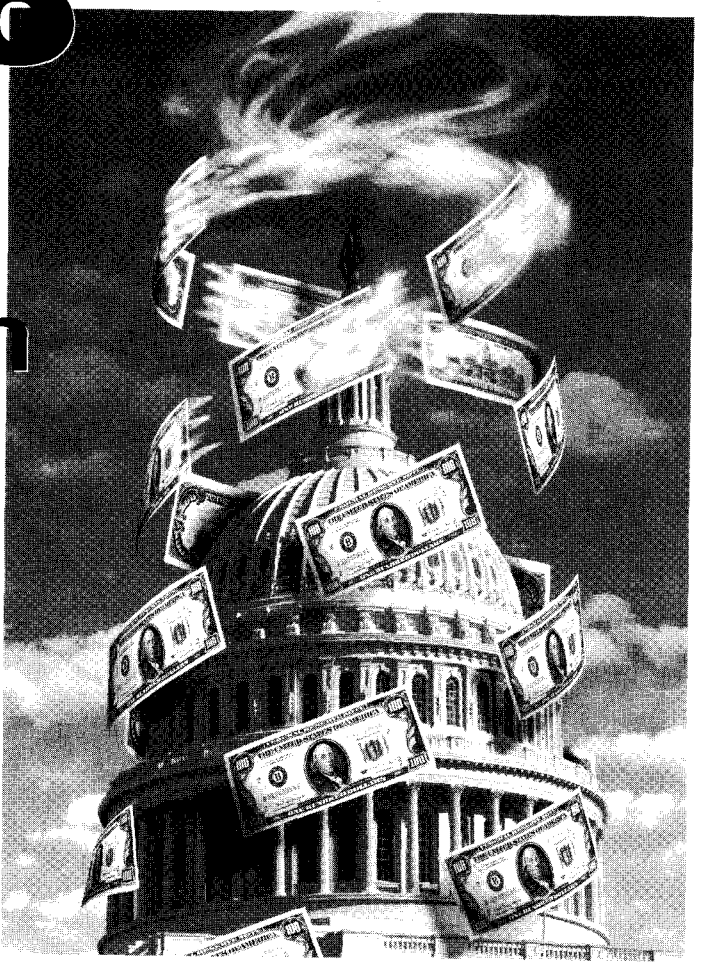
Tobacco Companies Flooded Congress with Cash. What Did It Buy?



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